No. 880
Friday
8 Sept '95

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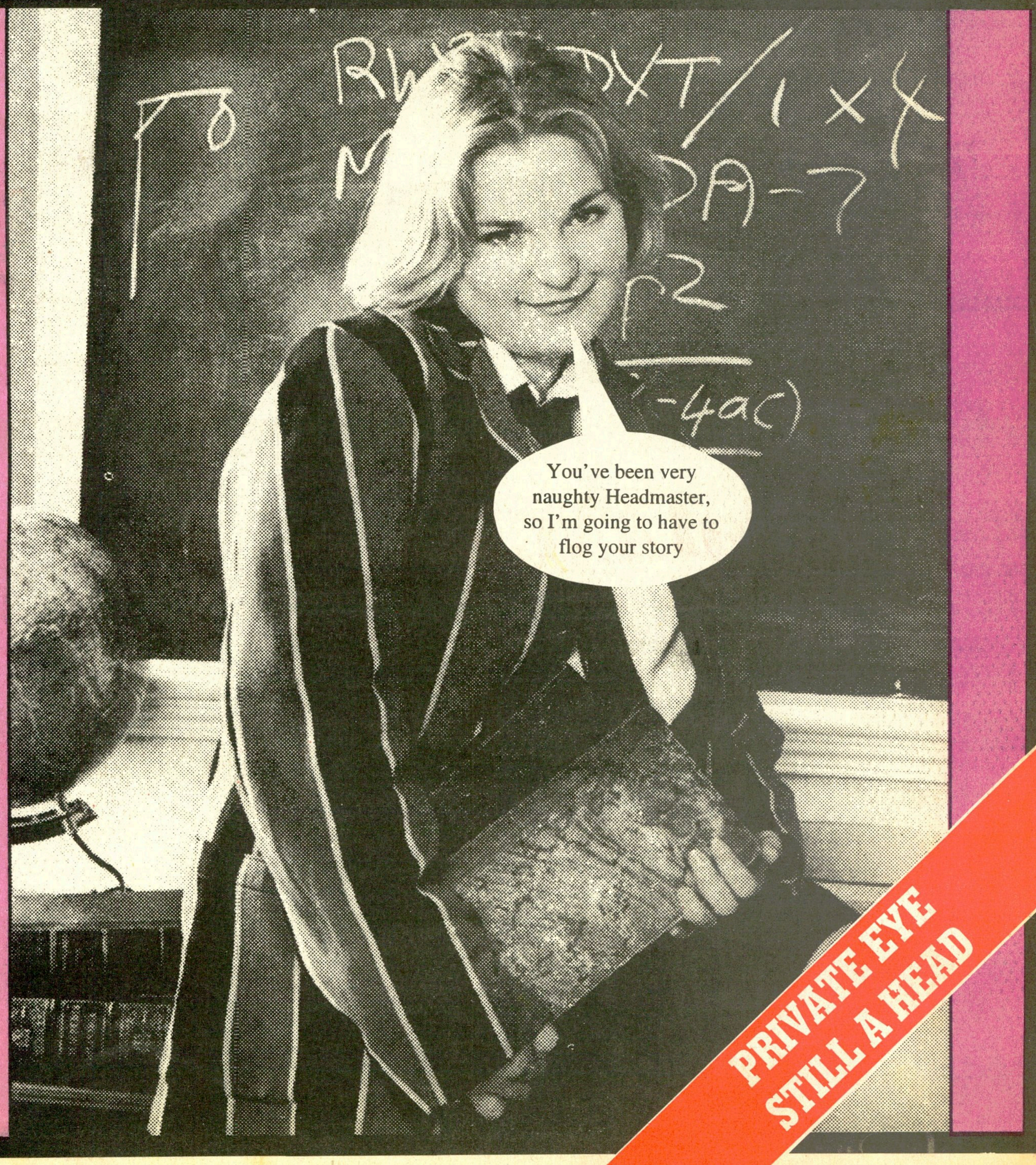

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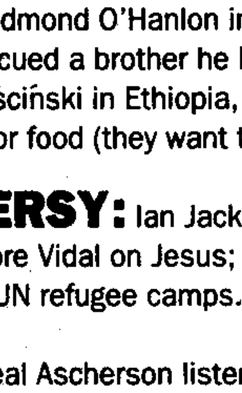

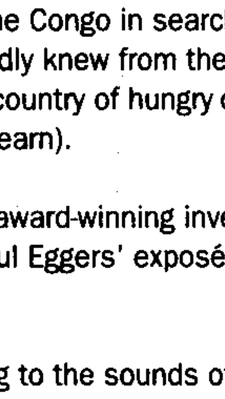

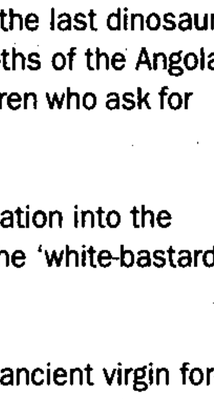

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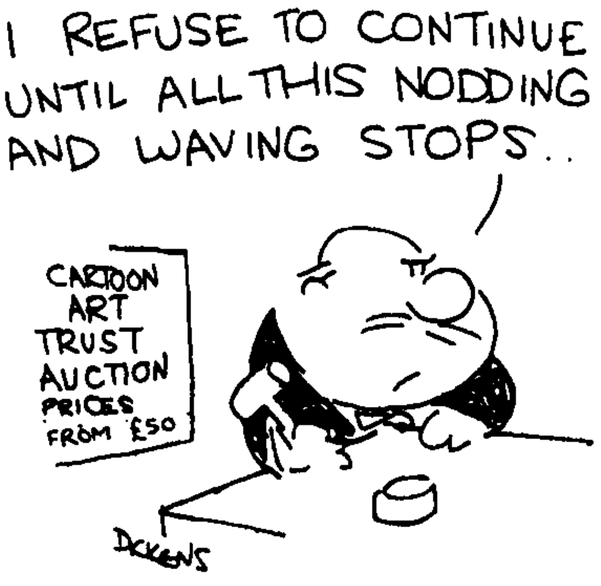

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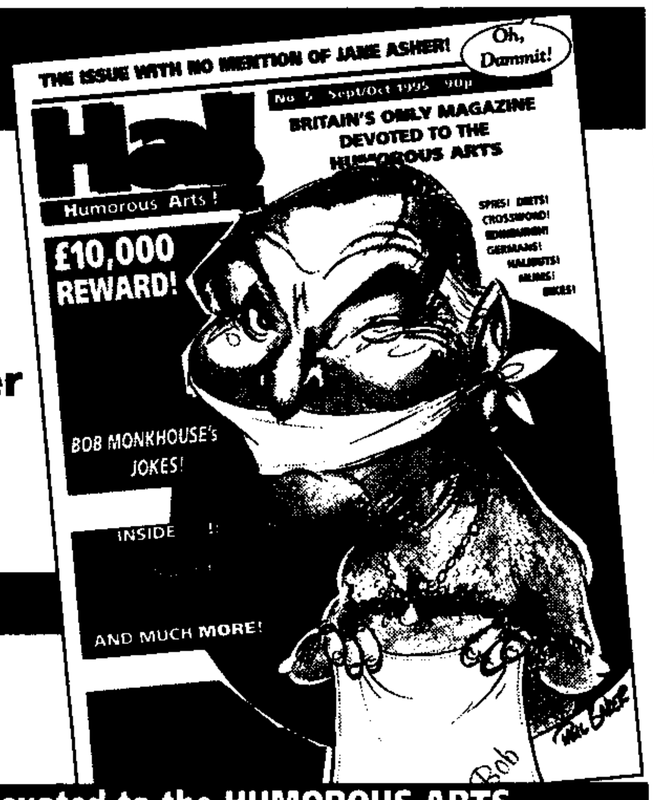

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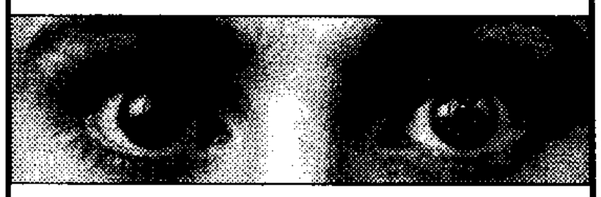

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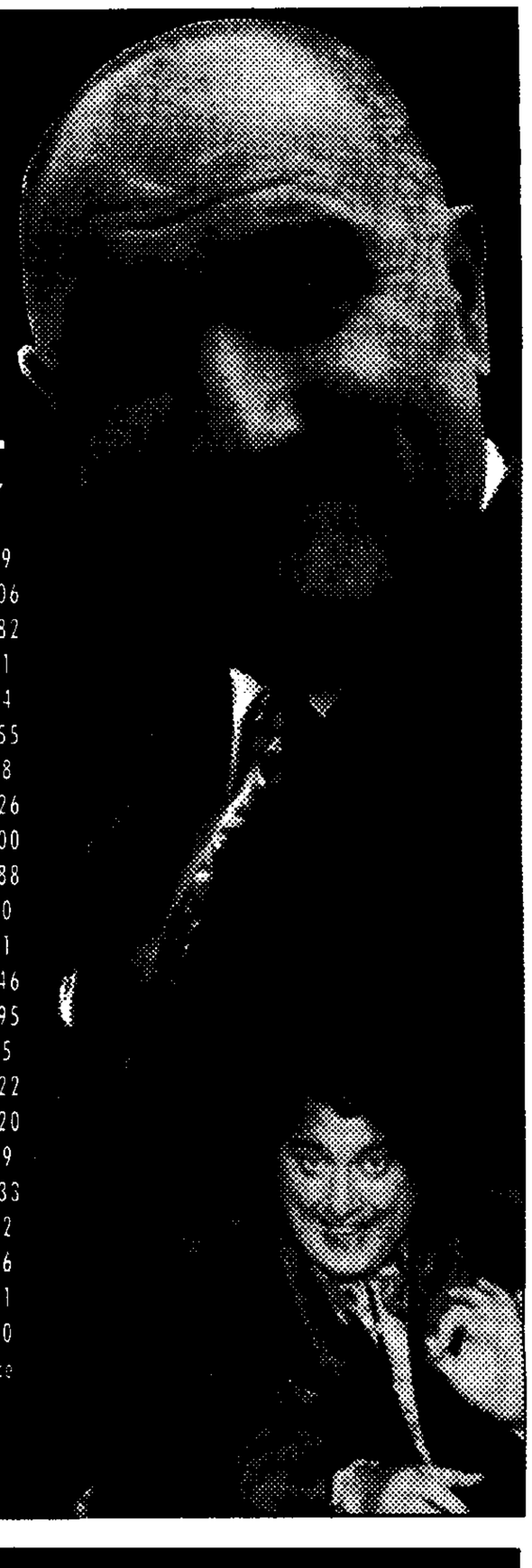

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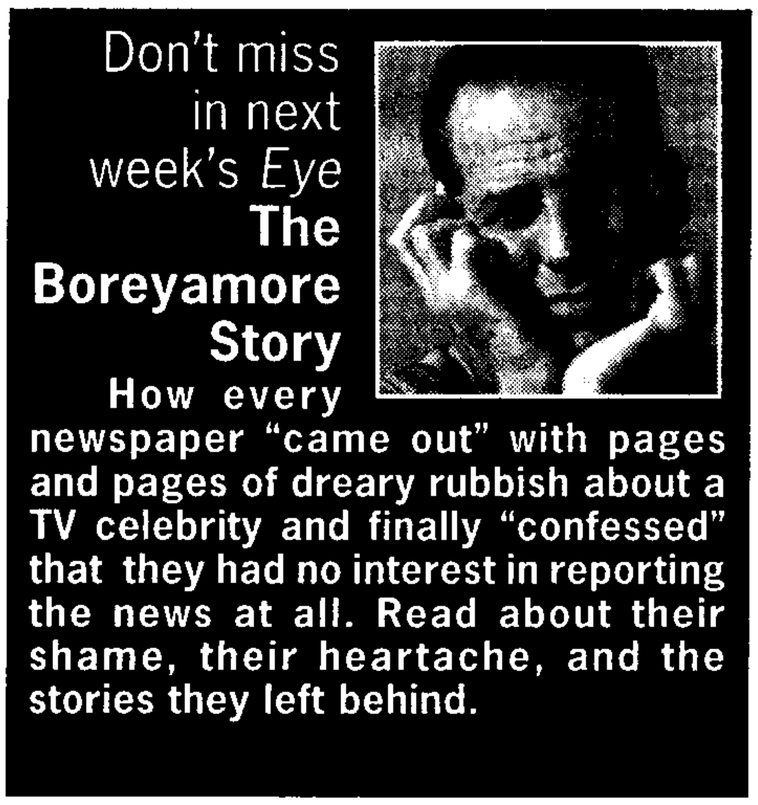
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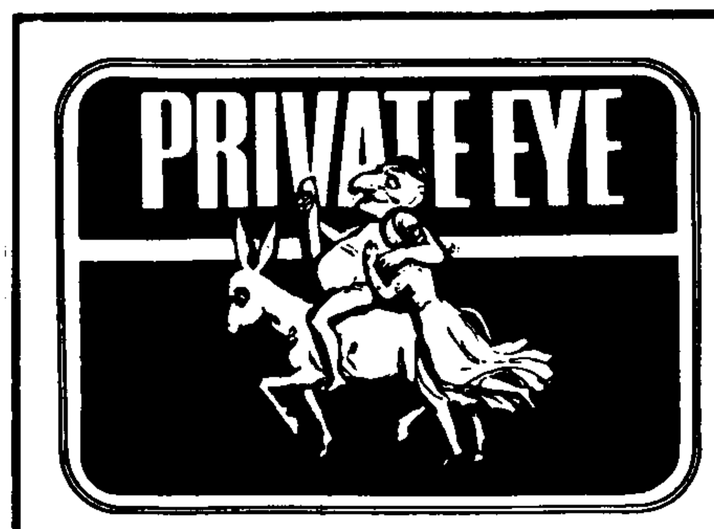


COLOUR SECTION

THE details of Jeffrey Archer's fabulous new publishing deal come at a good time for the author who, like so many other successful millionaires, is angrily contemplating his accounts from Lloyd's of London.

These show mounting losses for the years 1989, 1990 and 1991 which at the moment add up to about £450,000. When taken with the "forecast deterioration" in his syndicates, the figure rises above £1 million.

Everyone knows that Archer never discusses business matters with his fragrant wife Mary — which may explain why she has managed to avoid some of the more unlucky syndicates into which Jeffrey has blundered, including the notorious Sturge syndicates, and one called Evennett, after the underwriter David Evennett, Tory MP for Erith and Crayford.

Lady Archer's losses have been much less spectacular, amounting even on the most unhappy forecasts to less than half a million pounds. She can of course apply to the hardship committee at Lloyd's since she is no longer chairing it.

THE amazing talent of Robert Horton, the only chairman of BP ever to have been sacked by his own board, is not sufficiently stretched as chairman of Railtrack, the company that is making such a monumental cock-up of privatising the railway.

"Busy Bob" works a full, er, three-day week at Railtrack for a modest £700 a day. This is chicken feed by modern standards, so he has been eagerly snapping up other paid directorships.

Earlier this year he joined the board of Farnell, an electronic company. Horton was already a director of another electronic company, Emerson Electric Co, USA, and a rather mysterious reinsurance company called Partner Re Holdings, which is based in tax-friendly Bermuda. In June Horton added another directorship: a company called JKX Oil and Gas, which will no doubt remind him of his former triumphs at BP.

Railtrack is anxious to reassure the rail-travelling public that "none of these companies has any business with the railway industry".

ELECTRICITY privatisation was foisted on the public with the promise that we would become a "nation of shareholders" — but Eastern Electricity shareholders now know the truth of the planned buyout by Hanson Trust (*Eye* 878).

The little, common Eastern Electricity shareholder obviously cannot hope to hold any influence over the mighty Hanson. But what about employee shareholders; surely their position will give them some extra influence? Er, no. They have been told there will be a compulsory buy-back of the shares allocated to them. Will it be generous? Er, no. There is no compensation for the income they would have derived if allowed to keep a stake in their company's future.

Tax will also have to be paid on all the shares sold back to the company if the takeover goes ahead within the scheduled time. In the various sharesave schemes offered to employees, the company is giving the staff three benevolent options: either to exercise their options early and pay capital gains tax or income tax; take a cash cancellation offer; or do nothing and allow the option to buy shares to lapse.

So in our "nation of shareholders" even more shares are being transferred from the public to big business — often against the will of individual shareholders.

WHEN Richard Needham joins GEC as potential successor to the current chairman Jim Prior, his friend and patron for the last 25 years, the MP will be renewing acquaintances with many of the firm's executives with whom he has been in close touch as trade minister.

Chris Palmer, for instance, director of exports at GEC's power generating arm, visited the minister's favourite dictatorship, Indonesia, on a trade mission headed by Needham in May 1993, ditto in November 1993 and ditto (to Malaysia and Singapore) in October last year.

GEC/Marconi executives John Drake and Alan Tarbrooke also accompanied Needham on the November 1993 trip to Indonesia and Malaysia. A department of trade spokeswoman was keen to emphasise that "there were some trade missions led by Mr Needham on which GEC were not represented". But not many.

Mr Needham has made great play in recent days of his strict observance of Commons rules about declaration of interest. For instance, when in 1981 he spoke in the House in favour of what turned out to be the utterly disastrous self-regulation at Lloyd's, he declared his interest as a name at Lloyd's and did not vote.

In 1986, as a result of a series of an articles in the *Times* and an early-day motion by two Labour MPs, Mr Needham put out a statement about his involvement with the Laurence Phillips agency at Lloyd's. When he joined Lloyd's, he said, he instructed his agent Laurence Phillips to put him only on syndicates "which could be described as safe and sound". Phillips put him on aviation syndicate 244, which was so unsafe and unsound it produced a bill for Mr Needham of £21,000.

Naturally Needham was furious and denounced Laurence Phillips for disregarding his instructions. Eventually in 1982 a deal was done with Phillips which reduced Needham's losses to £12,000 and Needham left the syndicate.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

MOHAMMED Fayed, owner of Harrods and the Ritz in Paris, on Neil Hamilton, the former minister who was recently disallowed from pursuing his libel action against Mr Fayed:

"Hamilton, Hamilton. He'd fuck his mother for a penny!"

"Bloody terrorists — letting off bombs everywhere."

Street of Shame

AN extraordinary attack on over-privileged spoilt brats by *Sunday Express* editor Brian Hitchen has puzzled students of his hard-hitting weekly column.

"Mussolini" derided a party of loud Sloanes for speaking "in upper class twit accents" during one of his well-earned breaks in Mauritius. The professional northerner saved particularly harsh words for their "ill-mannered children" whom, he charitably opined, "needed a good walloping".

Could this possibly be the same Brian Hitchen who recently fixed up his preposterous public schoolboy son Alexander Hitchen with a highly paid staff job on his old rag, the *Daily Star*?

Alexander — nicknamed "Fauntleroy" — has already established a reputation as a freebie enthusiast (*Eyes* 873 and 878). But an informal poll among *Star* hacks reveals deeper reasons for the youth's startling unpopularity. When asked by concerned news editors, colleagues said there were two things about the over-privileged Alexander they found particularly galling: his upper-class twit accent and his spoilt-brat manners.

THE infamous telephone tapes of Boris "Hitman" Johnson, associate editor at the *Torygraph*, and his fraudster friend Darius Guppy, struck a familiar note with one former freelance journalist, Nigel Burke.

(Guppy, readers will recall, wanted to have a hack who had written an impertinent piece about him beaten up, and good friend "Borrie" was willing to hand over the unfortunate journalist's address.)

Burke's crime, meanwhile, was to have written a pert letter to one of the *Telegraph*'s commissioning editors, a Bob Cowan, asking for the payment he had been promised. He was shocked to find a message on his answering machine from a mysterious *Torygraph* stalwart, calling himself Bill Greaves. He said: "I have to say we're pretty disgusted with your letter which seems to be dateless and we shall be taking action — like breaking your fucking legs. Cheerio."

AN UNKIND observer has drawn our attention to a piece by Boris Johnson from the *Spectator* of 10 June, which reads rather oddly in the light of subsequent revelations.

"Contrary to the impression given by various theories of moral philosophy, modern life is not an endless series of bifurcations between right and wrong," Johnson argued. "Most of us, thankfully, find it hard to remember the last serious moral dilemma we faced."

Like the decision to conspire in the kneecapping of a journalist rather than let down an old friend, perhaps?

UNCUT

EIGHT weeks since joining the *Daily Mirror*, gorgeous Kate Thornton at last has her new "Uncut" pop column up and running.

However, in view of her disastrous record of bogus scoops and cock-ups (see last *Eye*), Calamity Kate is being shadowed on her job by hapless colleague Justin Dunn, whose task is to make sure she doesn't miss the story.

So what is her attraction? Only demented deputy editor Brendan "Chucky" Parsons seems to know. Calamity is his pet project and he has been quick to protect her interests.

Other staff are less impressed. They have prepared a disgraceful mock-up of her column's logo in which, by transposing a couple of letters, they reveal just what they think of the *Mirror*'s new star hackette.

UNCUNT

LAST Sunday's relaunched *Observer* was full of exciting new columnists — Richard Ingrams, Melanie Phillips, etc etc (*Shome mishtake, shurely? Ed.*) It was particularly proud of the revamped Pendennis column: "The *Observer*'s poison pen. Sharpened."

Alas, the poison pen scarcely lived up to its billing, offering instead such hot items as a review of the newsletter for alumni of St John's College, Oxford.

And who was the anonymous author of this drivel? Step forward Peter Preston, apparently so underemployed in his job as editor-in-chief of the *Guardian* and the *Observer* that he has decided to moonlight as a "gossip columnist".

HACKS at the *Sunset Times* are still reeling from the decision to use Simon Sebag Montefiore as the holiday stand-in for Taki's appalling Atticus page.

It is only two months since Montefiasco was awarded a contract worth more than £60,000 to write one article a week for the Style or News Review sections — thanks in part to his friendship with recently-departed Style editor Alison McDonald. Taki likes him too, as he informed *ST* readers before departing on holiday.

Whether Taki is still so keen is another question. In his first "Atticus" column, Sickbag Mountebank wrote about the death of Jerry Garcia: "Personally, I'm bored with former drug addicts and alcoholics... being acclaimed as sages whose experiences give them something to say. They are usually egotistical, destructive mediocrities whose sad lives give them no wisdom at all. They should shut up."

He cannot, surely, have been referring to a Greek columnist whose insatiable drinking habits are almost as famous as his conviction for cocaine-smuggling?

THERE is a curious (and expensive) new recruit to the *Guardian*'s "special products division": it has invested heavily in *The Idler*, a one-joke Will Self fanzine staffed by friends of the former junkie.

Weakly modelled on Samuel Johnson's magazine of the same name, *The Idler*'s iconoclastic literary content features a host of Self's chums (including the, er, brilliant Rob Newman and Sean Hughes) extolling the pleasures of taking heroin, bunking off work and such hardcore insubordination as not paying the bus fare.

Two of *The Idler*'s editorial team aren't complaining, however. The *Graun* has given editor Tom Hodgkinson a regular column to write about raves and UFOs, while the exotically-named assistant editor "Matthew di Abiteau" (real name Collins) has been given a six-part feature following the progress of recent graduates. The pair have been briefed to pick up on the hip and trendy ideas the *Graun* so expensively cultivates. All of which must make them the hardest-working "idlers" in Fleet Street.

YOUNG fogeys who have long revered *Sunday Telegraph* editor Charles Moore as their spiritual leader are in for a shock. At the ripe old age of 38 Charlie boy has belatedly decided to get "with-it".

He has been sighted at several parties recently defying sartorial convention by wearing *an open-necked shirt*. It is also rumoured that he has purchased a pair of jeans, although for what purpose it is not yet known.

Moreover, following his visit to the computer-mad Newt Gingrich in Washington last month, he startled senior features executives by instructing them to find out more about the fascinating and revolutionary phenomenon of the Internet. "Why don't we start a column on it? That way we can steal a march on all the other papers."

IN ITS front-page splash about the headmaster and the prostitute, the *Daily Telegraph* was keen to remind its readers that Charterhouse "is regarded as one of the Great Schools of England".

To prove the point, it listed several famous Old Carthusians, including Lord Wakeham, Peter May and Lord Rees-Mogg. Oddly it neglected to mention that Charterhouse is also the alma mater of one Max "Hitler" Hastings, editor of the *Daily Telegraph*.

Elsewhere on the paper, however, the wretched galley-slaves cheered up briefly last week when they heard that Jeremy Deedes, group executive director and chief hatchet man, had been carted off to hospital in a limo suffering from stomach pains. He was later sent home to recover.

"It must have been someone he ate," one hack suggested.

THE SUN SAYS... ER...

A REMARKABLE editorial appeared in the *Sun* on 21 August. "Michael Barrymore has finally said it. 'I'm gay,' he tells an audience of homosexuals. If only he could be so frank with his public. They won't love him any less. They'll still find him funny. And they'll salute his honesty."

Four days later the paper ran another editorial on the subject. "If Michael Barrymore is gay, then most people will say that's his affair. But you'd think he would try to be discreet about it for the sake of his fans and his wife. Clearly, his kind of people are not those who most of us would choose to be stuck in a lift with."

No wonder the poor man was confused. Having taken the *Sun*'s advice and come out, he found that far from being saluted for his honesty he was condemned for not being "discreet". But the *Sun*'s own confusion was rather more surprising.

Here, for instance, is an editorial from September 1984: "Hooray for Rugby! The Tory council has scrapped a guarantee that it will not discriminate against homosexuals seeking jobs. Farmer Gordon Collett declares robustly: 'We're not having men turning up for work in dresses and earrings.' Dead right!" Here's another editorial, from February 1988: "Homosexual organisations are sometimes seen as harmless, slightly comic eccentrics. In our view, they can be a force for destructive evil in the land... They deserve to be treated as pariahs. They deserve to be locked away where they can do no harm."

Barrymore, however, is a different matter. The *Sun* has often praised his consummate skills as an entertainer, contrasting him with unfunny "alternative comedians". The paper's natural inclination — to give him the same treatment it has dished out to Elton John, Russell Harty and countless others over the years — was tempered by a fear that its readers might indeed still love him anyway.

And so it proved. By the beginning of last week, the Wapping mailroom was piled high with letters from *Sun* readers who couldn't see what all the fuss was about. And on Tuesday night, Barrymore carried off three top prizes at the National TV awards, which are decided by the votes of... *Sun* readers. The paper reported the news under a headline which managed the rare feat of congratulating Barrymore while taunting him about his sexuality: "WE'RE RIGHT BEHIND YOU, MIKE (But Not Too Close)." An editorial edict has now been issued: it's all right to give Barrymore a bit of gentle teasing, but he must under no circumstances be villified.

This has caused a slight problem for TV critic Garry Bushell, the most obsessive gay-hater on the *Sun*'s staff. Last Wednesday, the morning after the awards ceremony, curious observers turned to the weekly "Bushell on the Box" page to see if he would stick to his principles and denounce Barrymore as a "botty-burglar" or "bum-bandit".

Er, no. Although Garry offered typically forthright opinions on every other TV celeb who had been in the news that week, from Shane Ritchie to Bob Monkhouse, he had not a single word about Michael Barrymore.

Terry Quinn and Lucy Allsopp

IN THE 2 June issue of *Private Eye* it was alleged that Terry Quinn, editor of the *Daily Record*, was having an illicit affair with a fellow journalist, Lucy Allsopp, and that she had been given a job on his newspaper because of it. We wish to point out that none of this was true and we apologise for any upset caused.

HALLO!

THE HEARTWARMING COLUMN

HALLO! TO THE Savoy for a generous new literary prize beano thanks to IMPAC, a go-ahead Irish company that is offering £100,000 for the best literary work of the year.

This time there won't be any cleverdick intellectuals to decide who wins the prize: the winner will be worked out scientifically from sales figures and librarians' reports. The two most famous guests both came, I was told, because they hoped to win the prize this year: Margaret Thatcher, for her brilliant autobiography; and Jeffrey Archer.

Jeffrey is as usual a model of charm and good manners. I am talking to him earnestly about his scintillating new idea for a novel when he suddenly breaks off with a hurried word of apology. Lady Thatcher and her baronet husband are leaving — and quick as flash Jeffrey is by her side to whisk her out and open her car door. "Important business," he smiles at me as he comes back.

Jeffrey then reveals that his new book will not be based in any way on his own experiences — apparently it's about a swindler and shoplifter who wheedles his way into high society, marries a high-flying business executive and makes his money by "insider" trading on the information she supplies him. Sounds irresistible!

HALLO! TO a boiling hot Young Vic to check the wellbeing of Sheridan Morley, *Specatator* theatre critic, who faces a marathon test: two Royal Shakespeare Company productions, *The Tempest* and *Bingo*, Edward Bond's play about the last days of Shakespeare, seen back to back in the afternoon and evening of the same sweltering day.

The atmosphere is so steamy *Evening Standard* critic Nicholas de Jongh removes his shirt and reveals a naked torso to the excited actors. Interval refreshments (courtesy of the UK taxpayer) are sufficiently refreshing that some overtired critics then return to their seats rather more overtired than they should have been.

Now of course is the crucial time for Sherry (*Dry or sweet? Ed.*), and the Marquesa is delighted to deny the actors' cruel claims that Sherry falls completely asleep. What utter rot: if he had been asleep he could not possibly have given both plays such blistering reviews in the *Spectator*, could he?

HALLO! OVERHEARD on the Caribbean beach where the former MP Dafydd Ellis, now Lord Elis-Thomas, chairman of the Welsh Language Board, is holidaying with his luscious young bride, Mair.

Holidaymaker (disgruntled that the Welshman has kicked aside a renegade towel occupying Mair's bit of beach): If you were a gentleman, you'd put that back.

Lord Elis-Thomas (for it is he): Well I'm not a gentleman — I'm a fucking lord: Lord Elis-Thomas.

Thank heavens chivalry is alive and well and living in bilingual Wales!

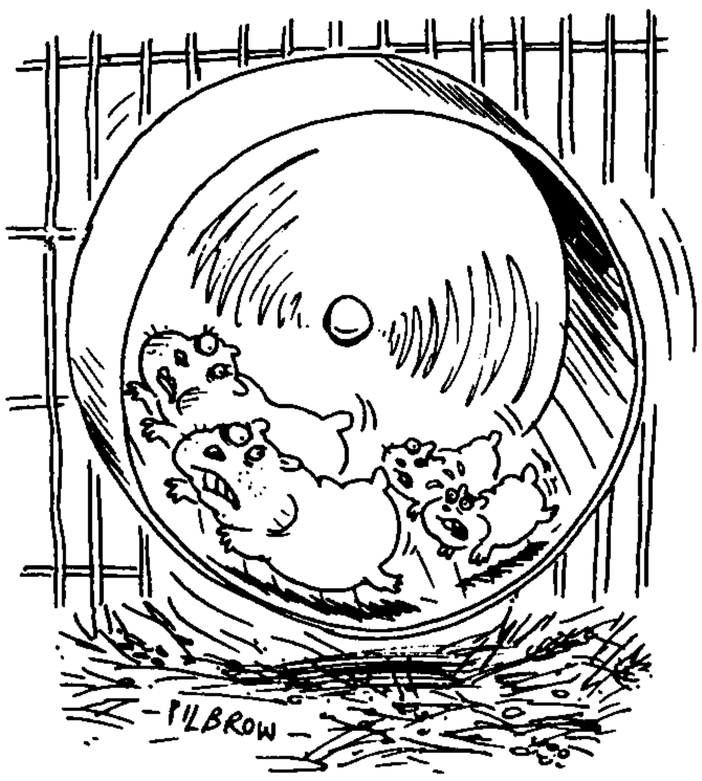
"Who IS Judge Dredd?"

HALLO! ONE unexpected bonus of the spat between Lady Waldegrave and her husband has been the reappearance of forgotten harpie Lucretia Stewart, aka "Filthy Lucre".

In a full-page article for the London *Evening Standard*, Lucretia observes that "Countess Waldegrave, formerly Mary Furness, is one of a dying breed: in fact I would go further and say that she is the only real remaining *femme fatale* in the country".

Well, not quite the only one: Lucretia is no mean *femme fatale* herself. Many of Mary Furness's "suitors" listed in the *Standard* — Martin Amis, Lord Neidpath — were also old flames of la Stewart. "She unsettled married men," the article continues, "she broke hearts, she made grown men weep." Unlike Lucretia, who contented herself with having an affair with a married Tory politician, Lord Gowrie.

Stewart concludes with a handsome tribute to Furness, describing her as "the most fascinating and dangerous woman in the English-speaking world". The former lovers of Lucretia Stewart — of whom there are all too many — may feel she is being too modest by half.



"Are we there yet, daddy?"

HALLO! **WILLIAM CASH, friend of the stars and son of the Tory Eurosceptic MP Bill Cash, has been seeking advice of a personal nature from his London friends.**

Familiar with William's antics on Sunset Boulevard (he was once sent packing by a dark-skinned lady of the night because the interior of his car was too untidy), his friends wondered if he was about to confess that he had been responsible for introducing his chum Hugh Grant to this arcane pursuit.

However, William's dilemma is more serious than that. He has apparently been approached by an extremely wealthy middle-aged lady film producer who wants him to sire a child for her. He wants to know what he should do, poor lamb.

Despite his impecunious condition, William does not have a thought for himself in this matter. His entire concern is for the future wellbeing of any Cash child and in this regard he has asked his literary agent, the charming Gillon Aitken, to draw up some sort of agreement that will guarantee an English public-school education, preferably at Eton, for his illustrious offspring.

Such standards of decency are rarely to be found in our public life.

HALLO! *JOURNALISTS, while always keen to dance on others' graves, are notoriously reluctant to do so when it comes to members of their own profession.*

Hence the reticence in the generous coverage of poor Michael VerMeulen's death.

The fulsome tributes to him included many a suggestion that VerMeulen epitomised the exciting modern lifestyle of his magazine, GQ. But in the light of details emerging about the nature of the drug that killed him (heroin, apparently, rather than the Groucho Club favourite, cocaine), and the matter of which woman actually discovered his body, this might be open to question.

But such muck-raking is probably out of place: the hacks liked Michael and he was an editor, after all — not just some public figure whom they didn't know.

HALLO! TALKING of drugs, celebrity lesbian Julie Burchill has been going on about cocaine again in her heart-warming, man-hating column. This time it's Sigmund Freud's habit that interests her. She obviously does a lot of research for her column. Good for her!

'The Marquesa'

WATER RIPOFF

DESPITE profits last year of £98.7 million, South West Water failed to take remedial action at a water plant which consultants had said needed better water filters and stricter monitoring.

Now the same plant at Littlehempston is blamed for the contamination of south Devon drinking water with a dangerous micro-organism called cryptosporidium.

More than 100 people have been struck down with a severe stomach bug caused by the micro-organism and a quarter of a million people are having to boil their drinking water. Incredibly generously, the water company says customers can have a whole £15 per household for the inconvenience and expense of boiling water for three weeks.

This stinginess is only fair: after all, South West Water domestic customers only pay the highest water bills in the country, an average of £304 per year, to drink contaminated water.

Meanwhile, customers elsewhere should watch out, too: there are three other SWW areas recommended for treatment because of the presence of cryptosporidium. These are inactive at the moment but only a small change in water conditions could bring the bug to life.

LONDONERS must be fed up with Thames Water's adverts boasting of their service and their marvellous inner ring main — the reason the region has no hosepipe ban.

Only a few weeks ago water consumers in south Croydon gathered to hear similar propaganda from Thames Water's business development director, who was asked by the audience if Thames was replacing old mains pipes as well as building this super new inner ring. He replied cheerfully that Thames had no mains replacement programme because the old Victorian mains would be good for another hundred years.

Whoops! One week later a huge mains burst in Euston bringing train services to a halt, ruining 22 homes and even putting people into hospital. A few days on, another two water mains burst in London. Will Thames managers now stop spending money on adverts and start spending to replace important peripheral water pipes?

AS THEY prepare for drastic measures to overcome what they are told is an "unavoidable" water shortage, how many people in Yorkshire realise what their water company has been up to?

For example, it has *not* spent £136 million collected specifically to conserve water in the pipes; and, into the bargain, it has swiped another £19 million from money which should have been spent on infrastructure and given it to shareholders.

More than a year ago the *Eye* revealed the great water company infrastructure scam. This arose from a deal with the government at the time of privatisation which allowed the companies to raise special charges from consumers to pay for repairs to infrastructure (mainly mending the leaks in pipes). Only two of the water companies (Thames and North West) have actually spent the money they raised. All the others have spent only a part of it — and stored away in their cash reserves about £398 million of the money they haven't spent.

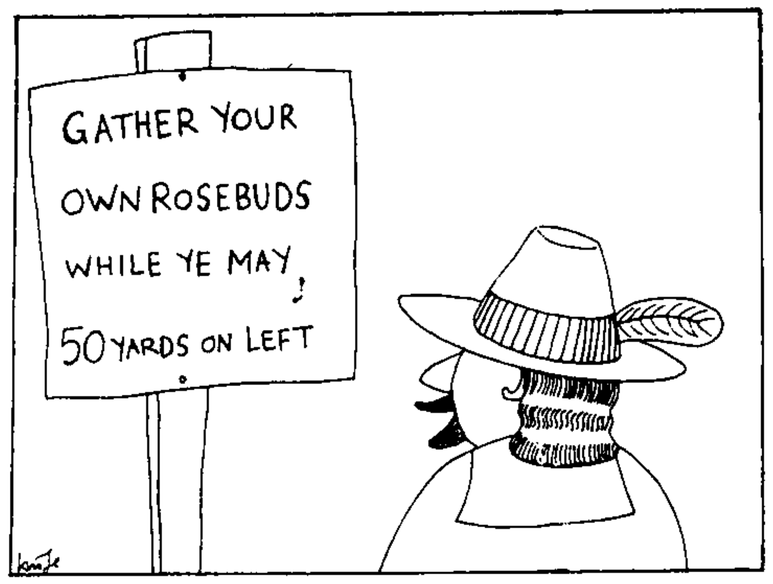
Yorkshire, where the water shortage this year is by far the most severe, has by far the worst leakage record (36 per cent of its water is lost in leaks). It also has by far the worst record for spending its infrastructure money. This year's accounts show £136 million stored away in cash reserves (and gaining interest) from money collected specifically for infrastructure renewal which has not been spent.

Not content with this two-finger salute to consumers, Yorkshire persuaded Ofwat, the so-called water regulator, to allow it to cut the infrastructure charge from the £68 million a year which was agreed in the past to £49.3 million. This agreement means that last year Yorkshire raised nearly £19 million more than it needed in infrastructure charges.

Naive consumers might imagine that this would be paid back to them, either by direct rebate or by lower charges. Not so. The company has swiped the £19 million back into its profit and loss account — and boasted about it! In its current accounts it brags that "this change (in the infrastructure charge) was the major contributor to the increase in the operating (profit) margin".

BACK in June the London-based European Bank of Reconstruction and Development announced that its deputy vice president M. Thierry Baudon had left for an even higher-paid job as managing director of the huge French water company Lyonnaise des Eaux.

Five days later the bank was proud to announce a $90 million project to invest in municipal services and infrastructure in eight countries in eastern Europe. The main beneficiary of the project will be the bank's chief partner, Lyonnaise des Eaux.



NUCLEAR DUMP

THE two official organisations supposed to be supervising nuclear safety are staying away from the inquiry into a nuclear waste dump at Sellafield which opened this week — further evidence of how the government is trying to force through a favourable decision without allowing proper scrutiny.

Her Majesty's inspectorate of pollution (HMIP) has had a stormy relationship with Nirex, the nuclear industry radioactive waste executive, which is the organ of the companies with nuclear plants and formally asked for the inquiry. HMIP had been employed to carry out safety research for Nirex, but last year the nuclear companies fired the watchdog because it did not like the warnings HMIP was giving it. That should have alerted the government-appointed inspector, Christopher McDonald, who could have said that he wanted the pollution inspectors to give evidence. He has preferred not to do so.

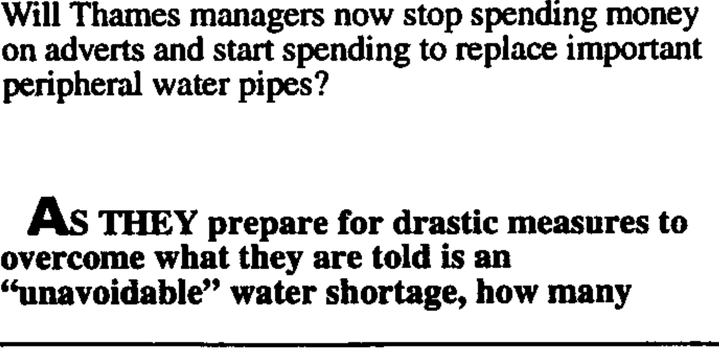
The other organisation not appearing is the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate, which argues that there is no nuclear installation to be inspected because this is just a hole in the ground.

The strategy of John Gummer, environment secretary, is to pretend that this is just a local planning inquiry and really nothing to do with nuclear power (see *Eye* 879). He wants the nuclear industry to get permission to drill below Sellafield, notionally just to test the water. But once the inspector gives his consent as he is expected to do (it's what he was appointed for, after all), his decision will be used as a precedent.

The nuclear companies will then argue that this justifies their extending the borehole and building an underground dump for British and foreign radioactive waste. For this purpose it is essential to keep out the nuclear watchdogs (who might express worries about the safety of the whole mad enterprise) and keep the inquiry as quiet and "local" as possible.

LUVVIES

"Hello Glovies"



I got married. Jeez, have I really been married for four years? I mean GEE. I'm a *DAD*. I go to playgroup and I mix with other dads in their forties. I'm just...really...wow, it's just fabulous. I *really* love my wife, too.

ROB LOWE
The Times

Submitted by Janice James

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for similar submissions.

LAST POST

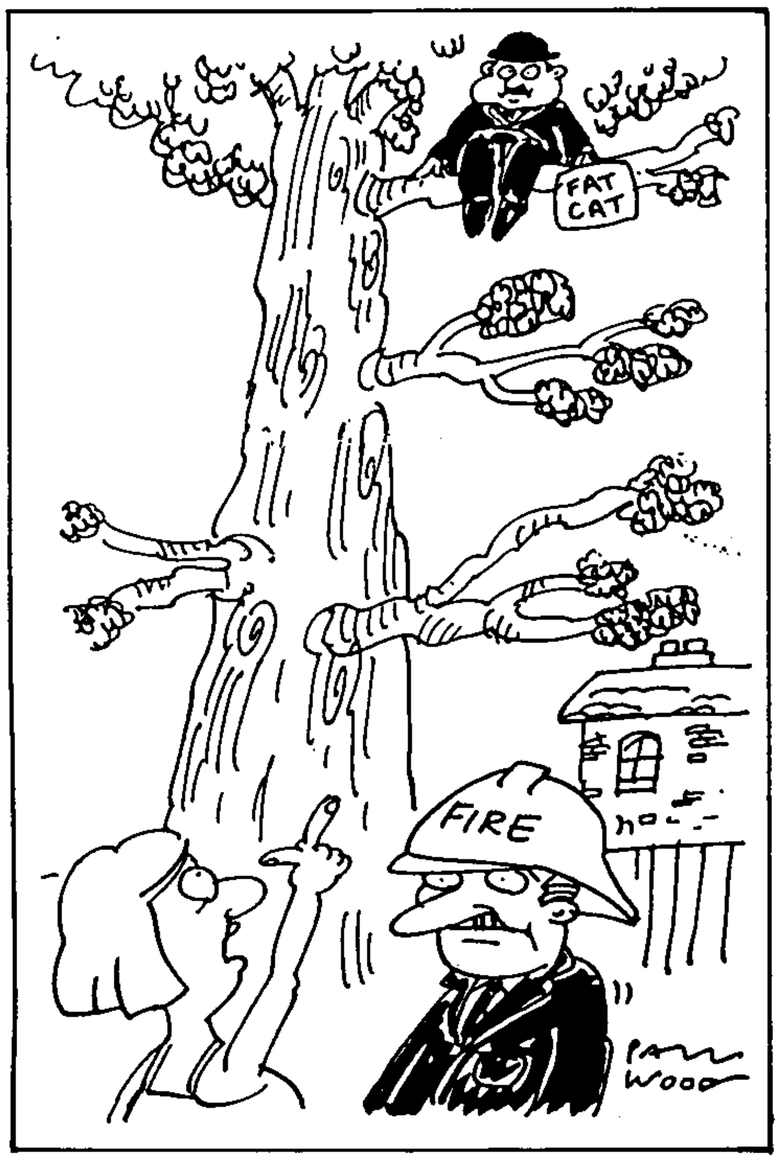
A FINE piece of PR garbage appears in the August issue of *Enterprise*, the Royal Mail house magazine, concerning Coopers & Lybrand, the ambitious accountancy firm, and its new "strategic partnership" with the post office.

Andy Colman, the magazine reveals, has been seconded from Coopers as "part of a strategic partnership arrangement". This partnership, needless to say, is taking a "dynamic approach" to "the implementation of the post office strategic vision" (ie mass sackings).

The *Eye* has repeatedly revealed the rapidly-extending influence of this ambitious accountancy firm. Coopers' economic director, for instance, is deputy chairman of Railtrack (*Eye*, 3 December 1993); and Coopers has two crucial figures on the powerful new Environment Agency quango (*Eye*, 2 June 1995). Surely it can't have someone on the post office board, too?

Well, not exactly. But in May, two months after the launch of the "dynamic partnership" with Coopers, trade secretary Michael Heseltine quietly announced a new appointment to the post office board — that of Peter Allen. A few months previously Allen had retired after four years as deputy chairman of a prominent accountancy firm whose name you might just recognise: Coopers & Lybrand.

Backbiter is in Tuscany



NOOKS and CORNERS

SECRETARIES of state for national heritage, they come and they go. Sometimes their reign is so short we can hardly remember their names.

After all, national heritage is not a thing this government (and the treasury) much cares about. For Mr Stephen Dorrell — remember him? — the department of national heritage was merely a stepping stone on his upwards rise. For that connoisseur of toe-sucking, Mr David Mellor — can we ever forget him? — it was a prelude to his tiresome new life of filling the airwaves with his dulcet tones.

But as for Mrs Bottomley, current holder of the post, surely she saw it as demotion to be transferred from the department of health to mere heritage? That adds to our problems, as she may well vent her spleen on the work of the department. Not that Virginia Bottomley has ever shown any conspicuous enthusiasm for the arts and architecture. Quite the reverse, in fact. After all, it was this terrifying bossyboots idealogue who announced that she was "not in the heritage business" when petitioned about the future of St Bartholomew's hospital in London.

Never forget that. Bart's is one of the oldest continuously working institutions in the world. Founded in the 12th century, it is of extraordinary interest. More to the point, it continues to perform a valuable role in society as a modern working hospital. Bart's survived the Reformation and Henry VIII, the Great Fire and the Blitz — but the greatest threat to its existence over eight centuries came in the shape of the Rt Hon Mrs Virginia Bottomley MP.

Perhaps it will survive her yet; we shall see. Fingers crossed. The point is, surely, that if Conservatives believe in anything they should believe in the importance of continuity and in the civilising role of institutions. But not, of course, Mrs Bottomley and the dreadful pack of hacks and doctrinaire marketeers to which she belongs. They only care about money.

And this is the woman who is now in charge of the department of national heritage. What will she do with it? Signs are that she will continue where Mr Dorrell left off, for it has long been the aim of this government to dismantle the system of protection for historic buildings that we enjoy in Britain. The mechanism for this is the process of "public consultation" and the excuse is the proposed listing of post-war buildings — which, as any taxi-driver or Jocelyn Stevens could tell you, are all hideous. A green paper on a review of the whole listing system is promised for the autumn.

In fact the listing of post-1945 architecture under a comprehensive thematic survey by building types was begun by a Conservative government — by Lady Blatch, when minister for the environment. This was done sensibly and thoroughly. Trouble came, however, with the handful of commercial buildings of the 1950s and 60s proposed for listing under the "Thirty Year Rule" as the spivs and developers and Conservative party supporters who own them loathe the idea of anything interfering with their right to make money. So, in March, Mr Dorrell asked for the public's views on the 40 industrial, commercial and railway buildings proposed for listing by English Heritage. The result, predictably, was lots of objections from owners, usually accompanied by a "report" by Anthony Blee (*Eyes passim ad nauseam*).

Now, to accompany a proposal by English Heritage that four modern buildings at risk should be spot-listed (Richmond Swimming Baths; Gillett House at Chichester Theological College; St Mary's School, Wallasey, and the former chapel at Hopwood Hall, Middleton), Mrs Bottomley has announced that: "I have decided to also open up for public debate proposals to spot-list individual post-war buildings." Spot-listing is, of course, a way of protecting threatened buildings by immediate action. "Consultation" about spot-listing is an invitation to owners to do a Nigel Broackes and have the building down before the listing goes through. Somebody must have pointed this out to Ginny, as she also says that: "I do not believe that we can consult on all proposed listings until we have in place a provisional listings system which protects buildings during the consultation period. This will be considered in the forthcoming heritage green paper." Quite. So why undermine the spot-listing now?

It is worth remembering that listing in Britain was a response to the destruction of the second world war. Rather than being a response to popular blinkered prejudice, it attempts to be an objective assessment of architectural and/or historical importance made by the sort of people whom Jocelyn Stevens hates: that is, experts.

Listing is not a preservation order as listed buildings can always be demolished after due process. Instead, listing necessitates a pause, careful consideration and second thoughts. That is surely a good thing. Listing does not involve any automatic right to receive grant aid (as it does in some countries); it is therefore done without consultation with owners and regardless of condition, property values or development potential. That is surely right and proper — but it is precisely this objectivity which this Conservative government and its cronies loathe. Beware the green paper.

'Piloti'

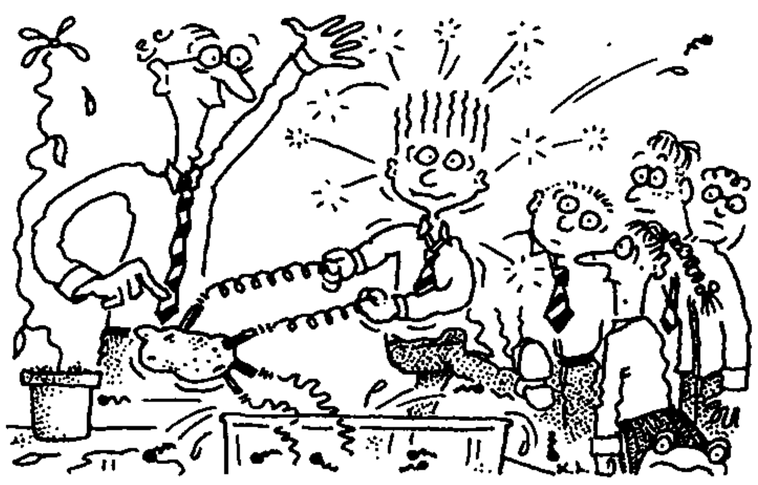
Pseuds Corner

But for Burroughs, Gysin was a hierophant, the decocter of the auguries. When they plunged into the noumenal together, Burroughs found there ample confirmation of all the magical suppositions he had always had. It was at this odd juncture that he ceased to be in any way a conventional writer and started to become something far more interesting. For Burroughs is a writer who instead of living with the phenomenology of commonplace perception and taking occasional sallies into the world of the imagination, has taken on a 99 year lease in the collective unconscious and deigned to send us back a series of datelined, bylined reports.

WILL SELF
The Guardian

Apart from this unhealthy, almost obsessive interest in ritualistic artists, the album also has some sort of a feeling of this new paganism that seems to be springing up with the advent of scarifications, piercings, tribalisms, tattoos and whatever. It's like a replacement for a spiritual starvation that's going on. It's like a tribe with dim memories of what their rituals used to be. They're sort of being dragged back again in this new, mutated, deviant way, with so-called gratuitous sex and violence in popular culture and people cutting bits off themselves. For me, it seems like a natural kind of thing.

DAVID BOWIE
Vox



At the Ikon Gallery in Birmingham, we have had our share of ridicule. When the gallery won £3.67m of lottery funding, some newspapers picked up on an exhibition from earlier in the year. Under such headlines as "Spuddy Stupid", scorn was poured on an installation by the important Latin American artist Victor Grippo which happened to be made from potatoes. His installation, in wiring potatoes to a voltmeter, revealed them as potential sources of electrical energy. Grippo's work, especially as it came out of his experiences in his native Argentina, was meant to symbolise the people's hidden resources under an oppressive regime.

ELIZABETH A. MACGREGOR
Sunday Times

Although a variety of disciplines now explicitly concern themselves with our dealings with physical objects, they have so far had little to say about that particular form of object accumulation which is familiarly recognised as clutter – that would immediately risk blunting this domestically familiar, but academically unexplored, concept, the attraction of which lies precisely in its potential for rethinking the recognised forms of our relation to objects. There are certainly questions to be asked, however, about the relation of clutter to other notions: litter, waste, junk, ephemera, collecting, recycling, antiquarianism, fetishism, museums, the home, memorabilia, memory, mess, disorder, space and freedom.

Equally importantly, there is a history and an anthropology of clutter to be devised and explored: what kinds of societies have recognised clutter, and what have they thought of it? Is it possible to go beyond Victorian, modern and postmodern perspectives on this subject? Might one even articulate a poetics of clutter?

Call for papers,
'Symposium on Clutter'.

Contributors: B. Barnett, A. Fan, N. Brownles, C. Hicks.

£10 paid for entries

LIVETV

Janet Street-Porter

(Edinburgh Television Festival)

POLITE applause greeted Janet Street-Porter as she ended her MacTaggart Lecture at the Edinburgh Television Festival, even from the Four Ms — the "male, middle-class, middle-aged and mediocre" television managers she had come to attack. Why so?

Well, Street-Porter had clearly mastered the art of the successful MacTaggart: firstly, to have a record of making programmes at least as pisspoor as anybody else in the hall ; and secondly remembering to abstain from naming names, giving everyone the chance to travel back to Orsino's blaming someone else for the sorry state of British television.

Some clapped in awe. With a record like Porter's it does take guts to say "people have lost respect for television, and — far more damagingly — television has lost respect for itself". It also takes balls to say "we live in an era where the BBC thinks *Pets Win Prizes* is high quality entertainment," when your own LIVETV cable station has premiered "the world's first canine film director".

Janet's message was that the Four Ms were complacent and incompetent. Not so our speaker: "The idea of endless reruns, sorry I mean 'classics' — from seventies football to old episodes of *The Street* — leaves me cold." What's needed you see, is innovation. Innovation such as Porter's own "talent-breeding culture" at Network 7 or Def II should do the trick with, er, endless repeats of "classics" like *Juke Box Jury*, *Muffin the Mule*, *Mission Impossible* and *The Woodentops*, mixed together with various short shelf-life dance vehicles.

Or how about innovations like *Bobby Davro — Public Enemy Number One*, one of Porter's programmes from her BBC days that turned out to be "a real winner" — ie a shameless rip-off of ITV's *Beadles About*.

And how about those other brave developments at LIVETV which are so unlike "the creaky structures and out-of-date-formula shows" that she attacks. You can "play *The Big One* for the chance to win a fridge-freezer and dish-washer" (21 August). Or perhaps you'd rather watch while "Alexis

drops in at a few shops to find out what's selling on the teen scene" (22 June). You might want some advice from new person and agony aunt Simon Bates, or the equally new to TV Peter Stringfellow. "The legendary king of the clubbers will talk to women spectacle wearers to find out if literary wit Dorothy Parker was right when she said men don't make passes at girls who wear glasses!" (15 June).

It is this kind of "talent", says Porter, that will protect viewers from those trashy "lowest common denominator" programmes made by audience researchers to grab markets, swell profits or justify a licence fee. We wouldn't want to become part of "Rupert Murdoch's global theme park", as Porter puts it, even if she praises him elsewhere in the speech for having "driven forward market opportunities for everybody".

But consistency is not Janet's forte (*Er, what is? Ed.*) Here she is on *Fawlty Towers*, for example. "Was *Fawlty Towers* arrived at by audience research? I fear not," she says. No indeedy, it wasn't. It was written by middle-aged, middle-class John Cleese and his missus, Connie Booth, and it concerned a middle-aged middle-class hotel keeper and his missus, and it had a remarkably low dance, hip hop, rap content.

How exactly Janet reconciles her damning of British television as full of over-educated middle-class types with her simultaneous vision of British television as the natural leader of "global education and information markets" remains a mystery.

Still, as if realising it's unfair to get so personal about middle-aged middle-class management Janet herself is keen to avoid naming names. When she suggests that talent is being "squished out of existence in the accountant's neat management structure which is currently paralysing British television", we are left to guess at the identity of the men behind much of the squishing. Is there criticism anywhere of, say, John Birt? No. Instead Janet inserts a small paragraph sucking up to him for keeping the licence fee.

One of the few TV names that does come up is that of one of her former husbands: "I dedicate this lecture to Frank Cvitanovitch, a unique television talent" who had, she claimed, been abandoned by the industry. The dedication made no mention of the time back in 1985 when poor Frank (middle-aged himself, of course) was abandoned by Street-Porter after he stumbled across his wife and Tony James of the innovative band Sigue Sigue Sputnik enjoying a romantic dinner in Kensington.

'Goggle Boxer'

I-BSkyB

I AM sick of the BBC constantly interrupting Test Match coverage with news, weather, Neighbours, racing, etc. I hope Sky, who would cover every ball, get the contract.

READER'S LETTER
Today

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

MEDIA NEWS

BBC governors last week bit the bullet and announced that all TV and radio news and current affairs journalists in London were to be moved ("co-sited" in Birtspeak) to its grim new White City HQ.

The move had been bitterly opposed by staff because it meant leaving the convenient and agreeable environs of Broadcasting House. Perks at White City include free rape alarms for all female staff and a minibus shuttle to the tube station — a walk 100 yards, but teeming with muggers.

"We believe co-siting offers a major opportunity to develop the quality and breadth of our news and current affairs output to the benefit of the licence-payer," said the governors' statement. "We also believe it will realise significant savings."

In Birtland, however, things are not always as they seem. BBC Radio's flagship news and current affairs programmes — *Today*, *The World At One*, *PM* and *The World Tonight* — will *not* move to White City because significant numbers of regular studio guests, MPs in particular, have expressed strong reservations about dragging themselves over to a God-forsaken corner of west London at the crack of dawn just to save John Birt a bob or two.

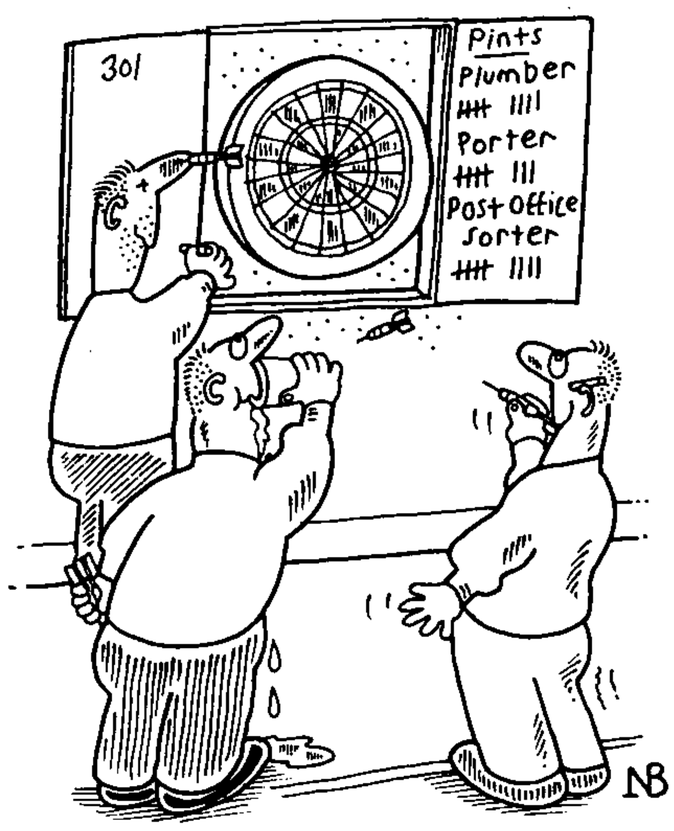
Meanwhile, BBC radio sport, which is *not* part of news and current affairs, is definitely off to White City. One sports hack said: "In May this year we moved into new, long-awaited purpose-built offices at Broadcasting House that had cost the licence-payer about £1 million. That's when we knew for sure we would be leaving for White City."

NOT content with digging up pavements all over the country, the cable TV company Nynex is now apparently installing its lines without the home owners' permission and damaging the house to boot.

Mr X of Portsmouth reports that an errant lodger ordered two phone lines and a television line from Nynex. Mr X was surprised when he returned from holiday to see Nynex technical equipment attached to his house, and was even more surprised when an officious Nynex inspector called demanding payment of a bill for £41,000.

Mr X demanded that the Nynex equipment be removed, and it was. But cement was slapped over the drill holes, and Mr X was left with a hefty paint job on the outside of his house. It took him six months to get a Nynex representative to agree that the company should pay the £200 paint bill — only to renege on the agreement later.

Pre-School Nursery Facility Rhymes



Rub-a-dub-dub, three men in a pub,
Ten pints of lager and on to a club.

AMID all the fuss over Rupert Murdoch and the government's media ownership proposals, a little-noticed measure has already taken effect: ahead of the media bill this autumn, the government has slipped through an order increasing the number of local radio licences that may be held by one company from 20 to 35.

The measure, which will concentrate radio stations in fewer hands, was too much for the Commons standing committee on statutory instruments. National heritage minister Iain Sproat had the indignity of moving the order only to have it rejected by a committee with a Tory majority.

But no matter. The government ignored the committee's views and pushed it through the Commons before the summer recess. First beneficiary is multimedia giant EMAP. It has swooped to take over the Metro group, giving EMAP a monopoly of commercial radio in much of Merseyside, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Humberside and the North East.

So much for departing heritage secretary Stephen Dorrell's promise of creating a more diverse media.

HACKS in the BBC's newsroom at Newcastle have received an important memo titled "Creating an Impression". Another Birtian initiative to raise the corporation's journalistic standards ever higher, thereby challenging the bias against understanding? Er, no.

"I know we're all keen to get away," the memo reads, "but it doesn't look good when visitors to the Pink Palace walk into the newsroom and instead of seeing television sets tuned to news programmes, they see them tuned to the holiday pages on teletext. When you've checked the latest flights to Tenerife or wherever, then please switch teletext off."

THE Independent Television Commission (ITC) continues to deal with complaints most sensibly.

According to its report published in July, the viewer who was outraged that a guest on Channel 4's *Big Breakfast* wore an artificial penis on his nose "was informed that this was not the case and the man was in fact doing an impression of Barry Manilow".

WHAT a delight this year's Edinburgh Fringe has proved! Observers say it was the most good-humoured for years — except on the many occasions it turned extremely unpleasant (comic attacks journalist; lesbian headbutts policeman; etc, etc).

Could this exceptional bonhomie laced with frequent outbreaks of crude violence have anything to do with massive substance abuse all round? Next year, apparently, the Perrier award is being renamed the Coke award to reflect better the habits of the comedic fraternity. What fun!

HACKWATCH MASTERCLASS:

HOW TO START A COLUMN

YOU are a newspaper columnist, staring at a blank computer screen and wondering how to grab the reader's attention. Mere amateurs might think the task impossible: stuck in the depths of the silly season, what do you have to write about that is even remotely interesting?

Highly-paid professionals know better. They realise that any and every event in their humdrum lives — a trip to the Proms, a flying visit to the Edinburgh Festival — should be good for a thousand words or so. And, when all else fails, there's always that reliable standby: what I did on my holidays.

Here are a few of the more riveting opening lines from this summer's vintage crop of space-fillers.

6 August: Joan Smith, *Sunday Times*: "Last weekend, against my better judgment, I was persuaded to go for a walk in the country..."

Tony Blair, *News of the World*: "Last week I took the kids to Madame Tussaud's..."

11 August: Paul Vallely, the *Independent*: "At the late-night Stravinsky prom this week I was sitting behind the choir..."

Claudia FitzHerbert, *Daily Telegraph*: "A hosepipe ban has yet to be declared in Devon, but the house where I am staying does suffer from a permanent shortage of hot water..."

12 August: Nigella Lawson, *The Times*: "I have had a character transplant this week: I went to the gym. I can't think what prompted this uncharacteristic flurry of activity..."

13 August: Zoe Heller, *Sunday Times*: "The greater part of this week has been devoted to putting my New York affairs in order after a month's vacation on Cape Cod. First there was my apartment to sort out... Then I had to go to the doctor's for a check-up... After the doctor's, there was the hairdresser's..."

Brian Hitchen, *Sunday Express*: "I spent my holiday on the lovely island of Mauritius, where the pace of life is slow and the smiles are genuine..."

Dillie Keane, *Mail on Sunday*: "Ten years ago I went on holiday in France with a girlfriend..."

Christopher Booker, *Sunday Telegraph*: "On a delightful, lightning visit to Brittany last week to pick up my son from his French exchange, I was startled to have to pay more than £20 for a bottle of ordinary Sancerre in a restaurant..."

Jonathan Ross, *Sunday Times*: "I have, for the past four or five years, always contrived, via a television project or a social commitment, to be out of this country during the summer months. I have no idea why..."

Andrew Neil, *Sunday Times*: "There was not a cloud in the sky when I flew into London on a glorious August morning last week..."

15 August: Victoria Coren, *Daily Telegraph*: "How odd to observe the Edinburgh Festival opening from afar. I have become used to being there every summer..."

19 August: Gerald Kaufman, *Daily Telegraph*: "At Wednesday's Prom, a preternaturally thin violinist called Antje Weithaas gave a mesmerising performance of Shostakovich's first violin concerto. Then the BBC Symphony Orchestra, under the young Russian conductor Yakov Kreizberg, dazzled the audience with Bartok's Concerto for Orchestra..."

20 August: Zoe Heller, *Sunday Times*: "For complicated reasons having to do with air miles and luck, I wound up getting an upgrade to first class on my flight to LA this week... The first night in LA, I went to a birthday party..."

Simon Sebag Montefiore, *Sunday Times*: "In Italy on holiday, I have been ridiculed for wearing black leather shoes in the heat..."

Carol Sarler, the *People*: "So here we are, back once more in glorious Edinburgh, where the Festival is fabulous and the friends are on cracking form..."

22 August: Alexei Sayle, the *Independent*: "My usual holiday reading is trashy blockbusting rubbish... but at the moment, as a big change, I'm working my way through Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*..."

23 August: Rory Bremner, the *Independent*: "Unperturbed by that bad review from the *Scotsman*'s Harris Tweed correspondent, I'm back off to Edinburgh this weekend..."

24 August: Frank Johnson, *Daily Telegraph*: "Having driven this August through bits of France, Belgium and Germany, I have found a new threat to civilisation: pedestrianised streets and squares in the middle of great cities..."

26 August: Jo Brand, the *Independent*: "I've just spent a few days in Edinburgh, arriving Sunday night... This evening I will be at the South Bank in London doing a bit of compering of the 'What Women Want' show..."

Nigella Lawson, *The Times*: "Writing a diary, even one that is a public witter rather than a private probe into an angst-ridden interior, is bound to reveal things to oneself. What writing this diary has revealed to me is that I don't do anything. Still... this week I managed it: I went to the Proms." She is puzzled by the antics of the Promenaders: "They behave at the Proms like rugby club barbarians."

John Diamond (aka Mr Nigella Lawson), *The Times*: "I'd hate you to think that I just sit here and write about the last thing that happened to me, so I should tell you that, having just returned from Glasgow, I was fully prepared to offer you my considered thoughts on that city..."

27 August: Zoe Heller, *Sunday Times*: "I went to see *Kids*, the new film by Larry Clark, the other night... When I got home, someone rang from LA to tell me that my girlfriend Claudia, who is an actress, was on the Charles Grodin show on CNBC... Yesterday I sat down at my desk... I had just eaten two warm, soft pretzels..."

Jonathan Ross, *Sunday Times*: "Last week I flew to Dublin to film some interviews. It was my first time there..."

Julie Burchill, *Sunday Times*: "I shall be in Brighton as you read this, sitting on my balcony at the Metropole Hotel..."

John Prescott, *News of the World*: "By the time you read this, I'll be off on my holidays, indulging my passion for diving."

29 August: Alexei Sayle, the *Independent*: "From 8 October in Aylesbury to 4 November in Ipswich I will be embarking on a 20-date, stand-up comedy tour of the United Kingdom. These will be the first live dates I have done in this country for 10 years..."

30 August: Bridget Jones, the *Independent*: "Can't decide whether to go to Edinburgh. Loads of people are going, but I'm supposed to be at the Alconburys' Tarts and Vicars party on Sunday..."

David Lister, the *Independent*: "I decide to take a break from culture and sample an Edinburgh tourist attraction. I go on the ghost tour..."

Niall Ferguson, *Daily Telegraph*: "I have had only one pang of regret at missing this year's Edinburgh Festival..."

Anne Robinson, *Today*: "We had a brilliant holiday in Austria and Italy..."

31 August: John Walsh, the *Independent*: "Sunday afternoons usually find me taking a brisk constitutional around Battersea Park..." Elsewhere in the column is an even more exciting revelation: "I went to the Proms this year for the first time... I came away filled with curiosity, however, about the moment when the Promenaders shouted at the conductor. A rum bunch they were..."

Allison Pearson, *Evening Standard*: "I began my French holiday with a vow to get through the first volume of Proust's masterpiece, *Remembrance of Things Past*. At the end, I was still on page 11..."

Never mind, Allison: try again next year. You might even get another column out of it.

"Nigel is the first one in the family to go to heaven."

DOING THE ROUNDS

THE predicted unfair dismissal of staff nurse and Unison rep David Carr from London's Middlesex and University College hospitals trust (*Eyes passim*) has sparked an equally predictable staff revolt.

Mr Carr, a well respected member of the burns and plastic surgery unit, has been a thorn in the side of the management since he led protests that kept open ward 2/1 at UCH in 1992. He went on strike with other staff in 1993 to try to prevent the closure of the UCH main building, campaigned against rent rises in 1994 and has represented many nurses facing disciplinary charges.

Most recently he has been an outspoken critic of the trust's lamentable "multi-skilling proposals" (untrained staff forced to do clinical jobs on the cheap) and it is over this matter that he was accused of "arguing aggressively" towards managers in April and subsequently sacked for gross misconduct.

In fact the 13 members of staff who witnessed the three episodes of alleged aggression reported nothing more than a standard manager-rep confrontation. No swearing, no physical violence and nothing more offensive than "Call yourself a manager?"

In the case of Sandra Knowles, general manager of surgical services who dismissed Mr Carr on 9 August with 40 minutes to clear his locker and vacate the premises, this would not appear to be an unreasonable question. Ms Knowles has earnt her £65,000 a year by closing beds in urology, nephrology, general and vascular surgery, orthopaedics, ENT, gastrointestinal surgery, burns and plastics. She forced a general surgical ward to relocate to an ill-designed site that caused innumerable problems, invented a scheme for outpatient department clerks to take on nursing duties and led the campaign to close UCH's main building.

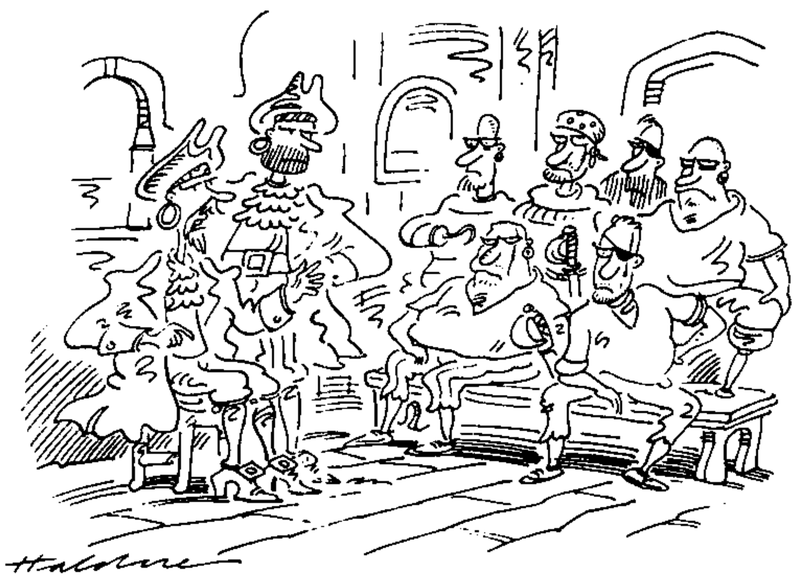
In sacking Mr Carr after 11 years' service, she has also displayed a disturbing ignorance of procedure. Any member of staff who is accused of "gross misconduct" (a charge generally reserved for theft, molestation, violence and drug abuse rather than carrying out union duties) is supposed to be forewarned promptly after the alleged incident and suspended on full pay prior to a swift disciplinary hearing. Mr Carr was told he was under investigation six weeks *after* the incidents are said to have occurred but was never given any hint of the severity of the charge until the day of his dismissal three and a half months later. In the same week, a senior doctor who punched a nurse in the face escaped with a caution.

Meanwhile 800 staff have demanded Mr Carr's reinstatement, including consultant plastic surgeons Brian Morgan and Professor Gus McGrouther. Ms Knowles seems unlikely to comply as the trust is preparing to replace Middlesex and UCH with a smaller hospital minus 100 beds and 600 jobs, a move Carr vehemently opposes. His prophylactic dismissal and the widespread ill-feeling it has provoked should at least put paid to health secretary Stephen Dorrell's plans to use the trust in his party conference speech as an example of one that has raised standards and is preparing for the future.

● PENNY HUMPHRIS has been appointed chief executive of **Portsmouth and South East Hampshire health commission**, to succeed Chris West who died prematurely last December. Penny got the job entirely on merit and not because her husband John is chief executive of neighbouring **Southampton and South West Hampshire health commission**.

● JAMES THOMAS, chairman of **Dyfed health authority**, has resigned after the district auditor unearthed some exceedingly generous expense claims. Thomas, a Carmarthen farmer who was paid £19,000 a year for three days a week graft, held a press conference to assert his high personal standards. "Unfortunately some errors were found which I deeply regret," he added without a trace of irony.

● ON August bank holiday an elderly man was admitted as an emergency to the newly opened **Solihull hospital**. His son was told it wasn't possible to say what was wrong with him without a bronchoscopy, and he couldn't have one on a bank holiday or the following day, a hospital holiday. This message was repeated on several occasions by assorted doctors and nurses over the next 36 hours until he died, without having had a bronchoscopy.



"I'm sorry, but the management can no longer afford the luxury of fifteen men per dead man's chest."

Although his son now realises the procedure is diagnostic rather than therapeutic, he has yet to receive an adequate explanation as to why it wasn't available until two days after a bank holiday. All chief executive John M. Clark would say is: "Your father was too ill to have a bronchoscopy" which is completely at odds with the opinions of the clinical staff he spoke to.

● THE **Scottish NHS** has not only flogged off its computer assets to the private sector but has handed **CSC**, the new operator of its four data processing centres, a £14 million sweetener.

Three bids were shortlisted earlier this year from Sema, EDS and CSC to take over the centres valued in the NHS Cost Book at £17 million. Last month NHS special projects director Laurence Peterken mysteriously reevaluated the centres at between £2-3 million in time for the bidders to dramatically downsize the bids and for CSC to close the deal at a snip.

The losers will be the public as the regional health boards will be compensated for the missing millions from the capital budget that should have been spent on hospitals and health centres.

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM

THE world-famous Lanark Blue cheese (*Eye* 865) has been in court again as its producer, Humphrey Errington, bids to save £54,000-worth of last season's product from being destroyed by Clydesdale hygiene police.

Some 44 batches are involved, all said to be heavily contaminated by the so-called "killer" listeria bug. They had already been condemned last February by Lanark justice of the peace Elizabeth Wilson after she heard evidence from listeria guru Dr "Jim" McLauchlin — he of the Public Health Laboratory Service, the clone of the department of health.

But when Mrs Wilson refused to allow Sunny Jim to be cross-examined, Humphrey Errington successfully appealed to the equivalent of the Scottish high court to have the decision overturned on the grounds that it ran contrary to the principles of natural justice.

The Clydesdale hygiene police appealed to the higher court only to be turned down by their lordships, who recommended that the case be reheard by a sheriff rather than an "inexperienced lay justice" as Lord Weir called her. But, having all along argued that cross-examination had not been needed in the first place because the issue had been so simple, Clydesdale hygiene police drafted in no fewer than six experts, including sunny Jim as a hugely expensive consultant, and on the Friday before the Monday start of the new hearing they dumped more than 1,500 pages of highly technical evidence on the unfortunate Mr Errington.

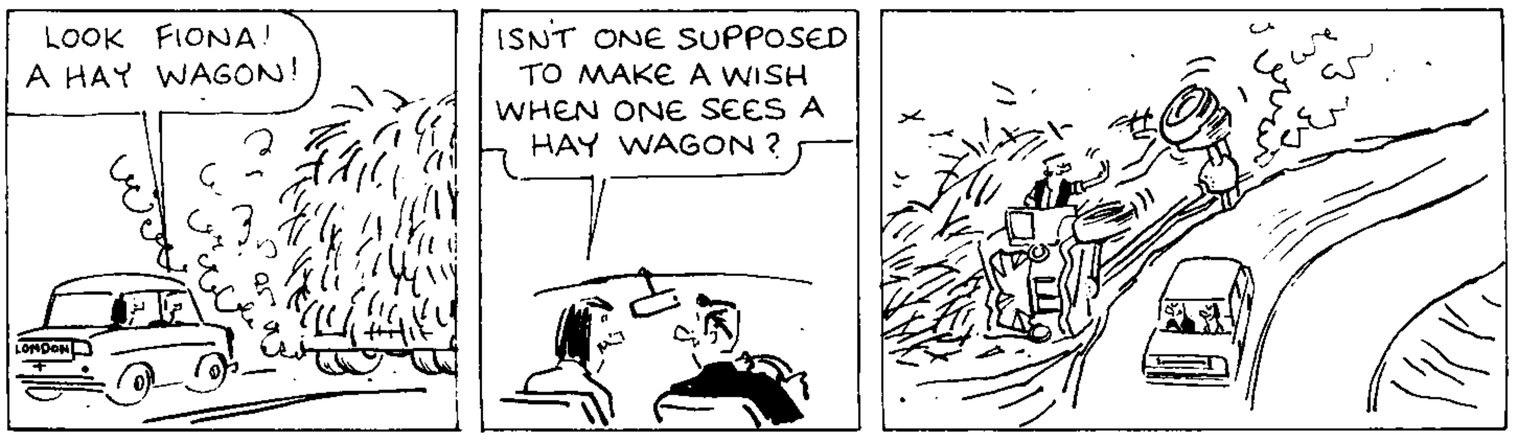
By dint of working until three each morning, Errington's experts were able to feed defence advocate, the indomitable Michael Jones QC, with working briefs. Jones was getting up at four each morning to prepare for each day in court, and after two weeks of this routine the team had got to grips with the evidence and were able to submit their own response, amounting to a more concise 43 pages.

This caused consternation in the Clydesdale camp. Its advocate, Mr Neil (formerly Sidney) Brailsford, sought to recall all his experts and demanded a day off to allow them to read the evidence. His Honour Sheriff Allen awarded him only half a day, but time had already run out and the case had to be adjourned.

So far the extravaganza is estimated to have cost at least £250,000 — including £500 a day plus expenses for sunny Jim McLauchlin. Humphrey Errington will have to find £100,000 of this, and owing to the arcane complexities of the law current costs cannot be reclaimed. So while the hygiene police indulge in a risk-free venture at taxpayers' expense and sunny Jim holidays on his windfall, Mr Errington may be forced into bankruptcy even if he wins.

Old Macdonald

ALBERT



WORKING through the gruelling heat of the hottest summer on record, even farmers have noted the curious lack of birds, not least a remarkable shortage of the once common inhabitant of virtually every town and village, the common tree sparrow.

Pesticide is often blamed, but Lincolnshire farmer Nicholas Watts has another explanation. Surveying the area of the fens, he has noted that over the last 40 years cattle and pig rearing has all but disappeared as the barley barons concentrate on EU-subsidised monoculture.

With the departure of the animals has gone the loose feed on which the birds could scavenge; the manure in which the insects thrived (and on which the birds also fed), and the hedgerows needed to contain stock, which provided the habitat.

This raises an interesting point for nature-loving vegetarians who, if they really do love the natural flora and fauna so much, must be prepared to see farm animals inhabiting the countryside. And as long as farms remain businesses — which will not be long if the Maffia has its way — the fact remains that, as these animals have to be kept for profit, they have to be killed for meat. In other words, if they don't die, they don't live.

Will the Vegetarian Society coin a new slogan — something like "eat a cow and save a bird"? That'll be the day.

'New Muckspreader'

THE Rotten Borough Advertiser

BEST'S BOTTOM

AS drought-stricken Murkeyside prepares for more fire strikes, chief fire officer Andrew Best's competence is being called into question.

To accommodate government cuts of £700,000, the fire authority is cutting 20 jobs and reducing holidays by three days per fire officer. To force acceptance of the changes, Best has called in the army, paying it £100,000 of taxpayers' money to help break the strike. He is even threatening a lock-out if the rolling strike programme continues. Since Best has paid the army up front he might as well use its 24 clapped out green goddesses in place of the 43 appliances which normally cover Murkeyside.

He assures the public the army is coping well, despite a student dying in Toxteth last week after green goddesses took eight minutes to get to the scene. Real firemen would have made it in four.

The economies being sought do not extend to the chief himself. His new BMW 52i is not the standard £22,000 model: it has £10,000 worth of extra goodies, according to the invoice that is doing the rounds of fire stations. The on-board extras are vital accessories of modern-day fire-fighting: automatic dip interior mirrors; air-conditioning; headlight washers; a £700 Sony CD player; and seat warmers should Mr Best's bottom get cold. There is also £1,200 worth of special upholstery. Readers may recall a thrash for senior firemen three years ago (*Eye* 790) at which Mr Best donned women's underwear. Nowadays the chief is into leather.

SNOOPING ON THE SNOOPERS

DESPITE the promises of new chief executive Heather Rabbatts, a spate of new inquiries means life in Lambeth is back to normal.

First to be investigated are the links between a private security firm, Network Security Management Ltd, and the council. The professional snoopers, based in Mayfair, were hired during the summer of 1993 to dig the dirt on former and current employees, one of whom has been paid to stay at home for the last two years.

Most disturbing is the revelation that Network was asked to find out to whom a former chief executive was talking on his home telephone after leaving Lambeth. The former chief executive is believed to be none other than the current head of the Commission for Racial Equality, Herman Ouseley.

Network has so far billed Lambeth more than £400,000 for its services — quite an achievement given that authorisation had only been granted for £35,000. In true Lambeth-style an inquiry has now been ordered into the investigators to check whether or not a link exists between the council audit section and Network.

In another twist it is now strongly rumoured that Rabbatts is also being targeted as part of a witch-hunt to try to force her to quit as CE.

Meanwhile an inquiry has been ordered into the absentee rate of Lambeth teachers. Truant — sorry, sick teachers cost the council more than £270,000 last year. The local NUT defends the rate saying teachers are stressed-out; but Lambeth intends to monitor absences more closely — a move, the NUT believes, that will put teachers under more stress and lead to more days off.

RED FACE OF THE WEEK

AS concrete blocks that fall off blocks of flats with horrific results are in the news, barmy Bent is sacking 17 housing engineers — leaving the potentially lethal concrete panels suspended on towerblocks 150ft over pedestrian walkways uninspected.

DIS-UNISON

A LAMBETH-style investigation into staff on the fiddle at Sheffield council has been met with less than wholehearted enthusiasm by town hall union, Unison.

The inquiry has been backed by district auditor Gordon Sutton and follows allegations that town hall workers have been fraudulently pocketing housing benefit while working for the council.

An initial survey compared the names of those on the council's payroll with those claiming the benefit and threw up the names of more than, er, 1,000 employees. Even before the matching exercise got underway, nine staff had admitted that they were claiming too much HB and one of them has been sacked.

In light of the "confessions" it is unclear why Unison rep Brendan Wood was so quick to condemn the inquiry as an attack on those at the bottom end of being politically motivated.

YOU'VE BEEN MAINFRAMED

PEOPLE who remember Dame Shirley Porter setting up the Campaign for Efficiency in Local Democracy (*sic*) might wonder why many drivers who receive parking tickets from Westminster council have discovered that they can get away without paying them.

Last year computer giant IBM sold Westminster a £2.2 million custom-built computer system to run the council's parking services. So confident was IBM that the system would be a roaring success it declined to manage it once it was installed... And now Westminster is suing IBM because the system doesn't work properly — "the biggest cock-up since Porter", as one council officer told the *Eye*.

It's a good thing Westminster has a reputation as world leader for probity in local government: for if it wasn't for the council's squeaky-clean reputation, cynics might think there was something strange in buying such a huge white elephant from IBM, a company in which council leader Melvyn Caplan is a divisional director.

Equally, the *Eye* dismisses those tittle-tattle merchants who ask after the identity of the IBM salesman who sold the crap system to Westminster. The fact that he was Francis Toye, a former Conservative councillor in Solihull and doyen of the Tory local government network, was entirely unconnected to the decision to spend £2 million of public money on a mainframe that doesn't work.

IN BRIEF

SOUTHWARK: A Lib Dem selection meeting in Peckham chose Neil Watson to fight the Friary ward by-election, Watson gaining more than twice the votes of rival Caroline Pidgeon. Yet Pidgeon — personal assistant to party leader Rose Colley — is being put forward by the party. After selection Watson was told he could forget getting much in the way of canvassing support and he'd better pull out. Without waiting for a reply Pidgeon was inserted as the candidate.

TOWER HAMLETS: The borough is keenly adopting guidelines from the Commission for Racial Equality to protect local Bangladeshis. The mayor is Ghulam Mortuza and his brother, Ghulani Robanni, head of service development for ethnic minorities. A grant of £12,000 was given to the Bangladesh Nari Samity Women's Association, but when the Good Shepherd Mission applied again for £1,700 it was refused (again) as the group is religious and "discriminatory" — even though it is open to children of all faiths.

OXFORD: WHILE city schools struggle, the ruling Labour group is spending £18,000 to send assistant chief executive officer Andy Brockie to university for a year. He will also get 11 weeks' paid leave to take his MBA. Bob Block, council chief executive, got the plan through the personnel committee in two days — on the confidential bit of the agenda.

MORE OXFORD SECRECY: Residents worried by the planned development of Port Meadow received soothing leaflets playing down the environmental impact on the famous water meadow just before the elections. The leaflets — officers were ordered to produce them on council paper at public cost — were authorised by planning chair Maureen Christian, who forgot to tell the opposition. She claimed officers had pushed her into authorising the leaflets but later said this wasn't strictly true. Labour then said the matter should be discussed — on the confidential bit of the agenda.

O·B·N

MY EDITOR, Liz Calder, is one of those stylish, confident role models my friend and I were thinking of. One of those older women younger women see and think, phew, so it's not necessarily going to be as bad as I thought. She always looks her age, and each age looks better and more interesting than the one before.

Maureen Freely
Grauniad

Submitted by Strobes.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

HUSBAND

If that Harry Enfield and his mate came in this pub and...
.. started acting like us. I'd say...
.. Oi, Enfield and your mate. You might be very funny but don't come down 'ere....

SIGNAL FAILURES

THE prospect of Red Star being sold for £1 shows how rail privatisation has turned thriving activities into grotesque financial jokes.

Red Star parcels were carried in the luggage compartments of regular passenger trains, earning extra cash for the railway for hardly any extra outlay. In today's fragmented railway, each different division demands payment for carrying Red Star parcels. The idea that Red Star is part of the overall rail service has thus been replaced with a notion that any part of BR which cannot make a profit on its own is not worth having.

Red Star has also been hampered over the last 10 years by the government's insistence that new trains should not incorporate luggage compartments (hence bikes and cellos often can't be carried and parcels space is at a premium) and by fierce competition from road-based express parcels services, which don't have to pay an equivalent to the track access charges indirectly incurred by Red Star.

BR will not say if rail companies will be prevented from competing with Red Star after its sale. If there is no such restriction in the sale conditions, train operating companies could start up their own marginal parcels services using their spare capacity. If all the units cooperated they could even set up a nationwide Red Star-type service all over again. Now, that *would* be progress.

NETWORK SouthCentral is planning to restore hourly services on the Uckfield line in Sussex later this month without doing anything to avoid a repeat of the Cowden accident.

Since last October's crash, which killed five people, the branch line has had a reduced service so that trains do not pass each other on the single-track sections. The risk of collision will return when the hourly service resumes, but NSC is happy to cross its fingers and hope another driver does not pass a red signal.

Previous *Eyes* have highlighted the ways the accident could have been avoided. The only one NSC is taking on board is cab secure radio, and that will be installed several months *after* the return of the hourly service. This in itself is not an absolute safety device, since it depends on the actions of a busy signalman who, ideally, will alert errant drivers by radio. By contrast trap points (see *Eye* 879) are automatic, as well as fairly cheap to install. An NSC spokesman accepted that trap points would have prevented the Cowden crash and said: "Trap points don't figure in our plans."

To be fair to NSC, two other contributors to the Cowden fatalities are being ignored as a matter of government policy. Instead of the Uckfield line being equipped with modern trains that can withstand crashes properly, it will soldier on for at least another eight years with its smelly 1957-built units — while ABB closes its train factory at York due to lack of orders! Automatic train protection will not be installed because the money is needed to privatise the railways instead.

'Dr B. Ching'

Letters

Legs overdone

Sir,

On behalf of myself, my wife, and indeed the entire readership of the EYE, *may I plead with you not to re-print 'that' photograph on your letters page ever again.*

As everyone now knows, the photograph in question depicts one of this country's most famous and distinguished people, relaxing and enjoying some very well-earned leisure time in the company of an extremely attractive young woman.

D. DANE,
Worsley, Manchester.

Gothic horror

Sir,

Nooks & Corners' long obsession with Victorian Gothic, the latest being a civic structure in Dumbarton, grows tiresome. The Gothic revival has given Britain more buildings with pointy arches than you can shake a stick at, and there is little danger of their extinction.

The resources spent on preserving them would be better used financing original projects and employing adventurous architects. Gothic fetishism is questionable even where originals are concerned: think of the immense quantities of wealth sunk into keeping York Minster swathed in scaffold, barely alive like some old dictator on a life-support machine. Better to sell it off in bits (billions could be raised like this) and use the cash to build something new, fireproof and capable of standing upright of its own accord.

Rest assured Gothic will be with us for some time to come, viz. the fabulous new Tesco projects whose entrances are graced with a medieval steeple. These are spires and arches worth supporting, for they are the civic centres of the future.

Yours sincerely,
ANDY SOUTTER,
London NW3.

Great deal

Sir,

I find Tom Carter's opinions on the recent exodus of Serbs from Krajina contemptible to say the least. Surely it makes little difference how this population displacement is termed, the results are the same: people are terrorised into leaving their homes and feel unable to return.

In this case they may still have their vehicles but their houses and villages have been burned and reduced to rubble. In addition, the effect of refugees having to run the gauntlet of stone-throwing yobs and suffer shelling from Croat jets is bound to alter the ethnic balance of the region.

As to the question of who started the war, the answer depends on which period of history you chose — although the effect of foreign influences does seem to be a common denominator. There are, however, a couple of questions that have puzzled me recently:

a) When, at the VE day celebrations, Tudjman revealed his long term border predictions there seemed to be a great deal of concern about a secret deal between him and Milosevic suggesting this would be bad news for Bosnia. Within a week the US had begun talking about a Bosnian peace deal in which part of the disputed territory would be given over to Yugoslavia and the rest to a Croatian federation. What is the difference?

b) Why is the notion of a Greater Serbia deemed an evil concept while a greater Croatia is supported by the West?

I fear the answers to the above questions have more to do with America's interests than those in the Balkans.

Yours faithfully,
DIONISIJE MARJANOVIC,
Bradford.

Lookalike

Portillo

Brezhnev

Sir,

From today's DAILY TELEGRAPH *I enclose pictures of Mr Michael Portillo, the Tory politician, and Viktoria Brezhnev, widow of the Communist dictator. They look remarkably alike. I wonder if, by any chance, they are related?*

Yours faithfully,
A.L. HAMMOND,
St Davids, Dyfed.

Over emotional

Sir,

Shame on you for stigmatizing a decent fellow like Tom Paulin in Pseuds Corner (sic — when will you young people come to terms with the apostrophe?) where all the other contestants were quoted from the written page, for which they may be reasonably held responsible. Poor Paulin was talking live on the tele and, as far as I could see (I actually watched it), was as drunk as a skunk and drivelling, which was the only creditable thing to be when trapped in a late night studio with the gruesome Lawson and some third-rate token bimbo, and expected to pronounce a reasoned opinion upon some unspeakable transatlantic abomination. Unlike a certain plantain-related satirical magazine editor I remember appearing on the same show apparently sober. God, what some people will do for money…

Yours faithfully,
ROSE GARDEN,
Birmingham.

THE LOTTERY WINNERS — MIKE TURNER

I SPY

New Cross

Submitted by Robert Davies
£10 paid for similar submissions.
(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies)

Hack attack

Sir,

I think you should apologise to Boris Johnson. After reading this week's Michael Barrymore stories it seems to me that tabloid reporters aren't beaten up nearly often enough.

Yours faithfully,
K. HUDDLESTONE,

Marlow, Bucks.

Fucked off

Sir,

I've had enough of this Taran-fucking-tino business. The double dose in the latest issue is the last straw. This material sets a new low standard for PRIVATE EYE, *and will damage the standing of its more important, high quality features.*

But I know what response to expect to criticism from a mere reader, even if I have been supporting the EYE *for much longer than you've been editing it. Therefore I shall be taking a customer's holiday for a few months until hopefully you've got it out of your system.*

FUCKING DISGUSTED,

Tunbridgetino Wells.

Get your skates on

Sir,

Re: Street of Shame, EYE *879.*

There isn't a single rollerblader in STARLIGHT EXPRESS.

Yours,
NICOLA WATERS,

Sedgefield, Cleveland.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"Princess Anne's not afraid of a latrine in Africa — she just gets in there and does the job."

COMMENTATOR, "Monarchy", BBC1
(Brian Dawson)

"Mike Atherton's a thinking captain…he gives the impression of someone with his head on all the time."

COLIN CROFT, BBC2
(R. Burton)

"The attack appears to be absolutely randomless."

ALAN ROBB, BBC Radio 5 Live
(John Lawson)

"It's your peripheral vision that goes when you're really exhausted — it's impossible to see anything directly in front of you."

SALLY GUNNELL, "Bodyheat" ITV
(Paul Griffiths)

"…and if I could just correct one fact…"

JOHN PRESCOTT, Radio 4
(Robert Watson)

Letter From A Faraway Country Of Which We Know Nothing

from Our Own Correspondent

SO the Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, the world's worst poet and the only psychiatrist to have caught derangement from his patients, has been abandoned by those he used to rely on and seriously bombed by those he used to scorn.

It's funny, but in a Balkan sort of way we can feel almost sorry for our Serb cousins in Pale, who are now getting screwed three ways by the three most unscrupulous and power hungry politicians in the world. We know how they feel.

I refer of course to the US president Bill Clinton, to Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia and to Russia's Boris Yeltsin, who can also call on the help of the French and British, not to mention that of our old friend the massacrer of Mostar, Croatian president Franjo Tudjman.

Tudjman is now calling elections while his chest still bears the new medals he has awarded himself and while the Serbs of Krajina are in non-voting mode across the border. He has even cancelled the constitutional protection of minorities for Serbs, since it only applies to minorities with more than 8 percent of the local population. So many have run away they don't meet the target any more, and his idea of keeping the home fires burning for them is not so welcoming. We hope the Croats enjoy their election. It may be their last for a long time.

Of course impending elections do wonders for a war, and while the Nato bombers had their laser sights fixed on Pale they also had in their sights US senator Bob Dole, who is busily vote hunting in New Hampshire. Clinton's only way to stop Dole overriding his presidential veto on the bill to lift the arms embargo against us is to keep delivering fused and armed weapons on the heads of Karadzic and his partner in war crimes, General Ratko Mladic.

Now don't get me wrong: they deserve every bomb they get. But why now? Why not three years and a quarter of a million dead ago? Could it have anything to do with the forthcoming US presidential elections? What else would put backbone into Wobbly Willy?

The bombs we enjoy watching so much from our balconies must be seriously puzzling to the people who are on the receiving end. Not least because, as some of our chums in Moscow tell us unofficially, the Americans and the Bosnian Serbs have been having quiet and friendly chats there for some weeks now — and far from being beyond the pale, the Pale crowd were quite ready for talks, even to the point of considering a "union" of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

After all, they had seen what happened to their uppity mates in Krajina. So from a diplomatic point of view the bombing is over-spiking the Slivovitz — although it is very welcome to us since, unlike our so-called Christian opponents, we don't go for this turning the other cheek stuff.

For the time being we are also prepared to forgive the United Nations. We really appreciated how quickly it decided this time that it was the Serbs who killed 37 of us in the market place in Sarajevo. Last time the Serbs dropped a shell there, the UN took ages before eventually suggesting that "Well, er, yes, it could have been the people who have been shelling the city for the previous two years. But then it's difficult to be sure." The UN then told gullible British journalists for two years

"You wait ages for one then hundreds come along at the same time"

afterwards that it was our own Bosnian army who dropped the shell.

Then there were those famous mandates that said the UN could do nothing without the Serbian say-so, and if peacekeepers fired back they should not hit anyone lest it upset the Serbs. Suddenly the same security council resolutions allow Nato to blast the hell out of the Serbs. Of course it could just be coincidence that it took three years to make this amazing discovery about the meaning mandates, and that it happened just as the British troops scarpered out of Gorazde.

Which is why, if we had a vote, we'd all be rooting for Bob Dole as president. They say he has a way with enemies, but we can live with that. Not least since he seems to remember that Slobodan Milosevic, Clinton's great peacemaker, actually started the war and is still the patron of General Mladic, who was indicted of war crimes even before his part in the Srebrenica bloodbath.

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

FUNNY OLD WORLD

COMPILED BY

Victor Lewis-Smith

o "It is well-known that the kneecaps of the dead have magical properties," a police spokesman told reporters in the central Philippine town of Bacolod, where residents had been complaining about nocturnal hammering sounds from a nearby cemetery. "We have discovered that a gang of voodoo fanatics has been raiding dozens of tombs in recent weeks, unearthing the bodies and stealing only the knees. These wicked thieves pound the kneecaps into powder, which they then burn like incense outside any house which they want to rob. The smoke from the kneecaps puts the occupants to sleep, and the thieves can then burgle the house. Until these criminals are caught, undertakers will therefore be removing kneecaps from all corpses before burial." *(Trinidad Guardian, 7 August 1995. Spotter – T.G. Gosling)*

—o—

o *"The Devil made me do it, make no mistake about that" declared David Wylie, while defending himself in the Magistrates Court in Larne. "I'm telling you, it wasn't the real me who committed this vile act, it was my former self, before I became a born-again Christian. When a Christian goes out, he must wear his best armour to protect himself against Satan, but I wasn't wearing armour – just my pyjamas".*

An RUC officer had earlier informed Magistrate Robert Alcom of the circumstances that led to 32-year old Wylie's arrest on a charge of indecency: "On the morning in question, I went to Drumalis Convent because one of the Sisters had telephoned the station and asked us to come quickly, because the nuns had spotted a man doing 'something unspeakable' with a bicycle in the convent grounds. When I got there, I saw Mr Wylie in the cloister, his underpants round his knees, performing a bizarre sexual act with a nun's bicycle. He'd smeared lubricating cream on the saddle, and was having sexual intercourse with the seat, while simultaneously reading a pornographic magazine called Filthy Habits, *which*

featured nuns. When I asked what he was doing, he said it was 'based on things I saw while I was working in London,' and added that 'The Devil's work is everywhere'. At that point, we arrested him."

A spokesnun for the Cross and Passion Sisters later told reporters: "It was disgusting, we were all very shocked about it. It's not the kind of thing you expect to see outside a convent window first thing in the morning. We want to put this behind us." The case was adjourned for a Probation Service report. (Sunday World [Dublin], 20 August 1995. Spotter – Robin Livingstone)

—o—

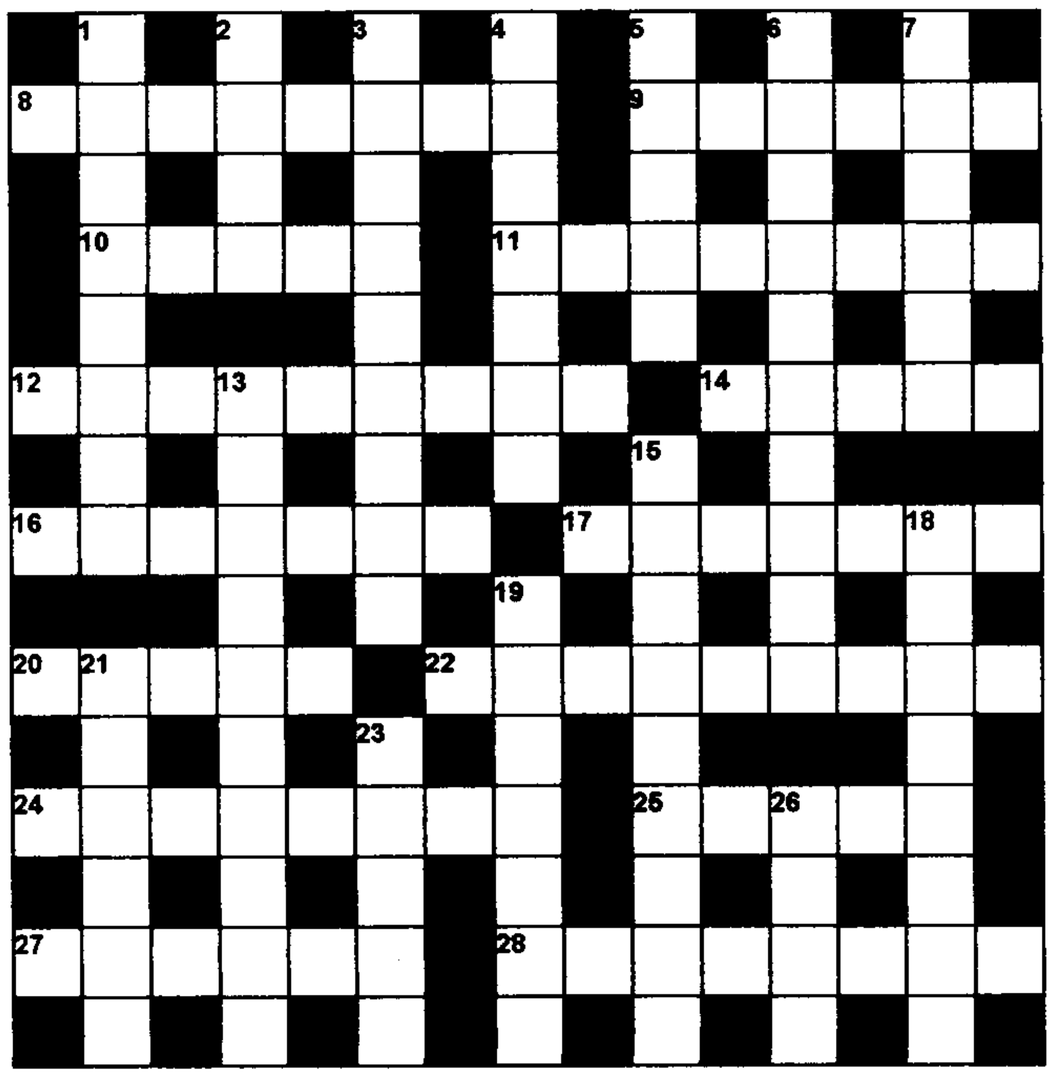
o "So you don't want to see my bottom again Wiggy," shouted Annarita Muraglia at bemused Judge Andrew Brooks, as she turned her back on him in the dock, hitched up her red floral skirt, and displayed her naked buttocks to him in Snaresbrook Crown Court.

The outburst from Italian-born Muraglia, 24, occurred while the judge was concluding his summary of her previous offenses: "In December last year, you flashed your bottom, which bore the message *Merry Christmas*, at a High Court judge. You have bashed one district judge, thrown a telephone at another and, at a preliminary hearing earlier this year, you rushed towards the bench and, for reasons best known to yourself, proceeded to spray me with green paint. Some of it is still visible on my wig and my robe, despite my wife's best endeavours. On that occasion, I gave you a chance to purge your contempt, but you have shown no remorse whatsoever and even wrote to me boasting of your previous contempts. I am now satisfied that your behaviour was calculated to interfere with the administration of justice."

After the incident, Judge Brooks asked officials "What did she have written on her bottom? Happy something I think." The complete message was subsequently discovered to be *Happy Birthday*. Maraglia was sentenced to 15 months in jail for contempt. *(Waltham Forest Guardian, 10 August 1995. Spotter – Mrs. M. Mannering).*

EYE CROSSWORD 36 by Cyclops

£100 Winner S. DIFFIN



ACROSS

8 An attempt to accommodate stupid arse may be seen by all in Waldegrave's appointment (8)
9 UK ballsed up briefly with Aitken half under Saddam's control for a time (6)
10 Some safe haven always open to corruption (5)
11 Recklessly fear nothing? Then your fate is this ageing Russian operator (8)
12 Slicker news gives ethnic cleansing sex appeal, yes? (2,3,4)
14 Sort of video that's murder to watch (5)
16 A place of incarceration of looney New Age travellers originally! (7)
17 Fallen Democrats covering up president no longer (7)
20 Thicko dictator has nothing on Tory leader! (5)
22 The role of John Major's predecessor in roundabout piece of legislation (6,3)
24 Ex-wrinkly given hot tongue (3,5)
25 Deputy last seen in boozy haze (5)
27 Uninitiated nookie with ring, etc. possibly makes a big hit on a ship (6)
28 The only sort of Wogan-fronted tv show that appeals to viewers? (8)

DOWN

1 Takes a place like Ulster: Irish start getting replaced by English – now it's full of Brits! (8)
2 Brown – like the noses of those who do? (4)
3 Boozer needs long one to take financial institutions' hype (9)
4 House of Windsor? Extremely dirty and obnoxious! (7)
5 Steer clear of sexist allusion to woman! (5)
6 Raised in defiance of alcoholic measures? (3,7)
7 Hack linked to rotten fraud (3-3)
13 Penthouse-style on-the-job situation would-be cabinet ministers aspire to? (4,6)
15 Boycott has vulgar mouth from which nothing of substance emerges! (5,4)
18 Tyrant shortened penis on King Edward, we hear (8)
19 Desperate Birt yelled '50% off licence!' (7)
21 Superior new Left exudes endless... (2,4)
23 ...stinking releases, being strong on cultural activities (5)
26 Spots adolescent outbursts (4)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 15.09.95. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 35

ACROSS: 7 Adultery 9 Rwanda 10/24 Silent Majority 11 New balls 12 Mystic Meg 13 Peace 16 Parties 18 Bigotry 20 Ulcer 21 Coming Out 24 (See 10) 26 Agency 27 Amused 28 Attorney

DOWN: 1 Client 2 Testicles 3 Eye Need 4 Crown 5 Sarajevo 6 Idol 8 Daily Mail 14 Carbuncle 15 Vigilante 17 The House 19 Tory rag 22 Greer 23 Hilda 25 Arms

SIR FRANCIS BRUNO
AN APOLOGY

In recent years along with all other newspapers we may have given the impression that the new Heavyweight Champion of the World was in some way unsuitable for his role as a contender for the title. Headlines such as "Frankly You're Useless", "Bruno-hoper" and "Sod Off Back To Panto, You Third-Rate Bum" may have inadvertantly given our readers the impression that Sir Francis Bruno was less than competent in his professional capacity as a pugilist.

We now recognise that the Battersea-born King of the Ring is a heavyweight champion in the mould of Rocky Marciano, Joe Louis and Muhammed Ali.

He is moreover one of the finest actors of his generation as anyone who was privileged to see his performance as "Buttons" in Simon Gray's definitive "Puss In Boots" at the Reading Hexagon will confirm. His television role with Sir Harold Carpenter is further proof of his matchless professionalism.

We would like to apologise to Sir Francis and his family for any distress or embarrassment which our reports may have caused.

ON OTHER PAGES

● Tyson v. Bruno — You've gotta be joking. ● Forget It Frank — You're going to be murdered. ● Unfunny Bruno and Bosnia cartoon by Ridell.

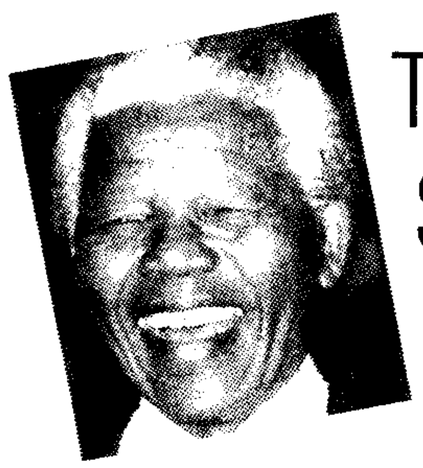
PUBLIC SCHOOLS EXAMINATION (GIRLS)
Very Common Entrance
Latin (Oral)

Time Allowed: 3 minutes

1. **What do you understand by the following expressions?**
   (i) In flagrante
   (ii) Coitus interruptus
   (iii) soixante-neuf
2. **Decline:**
   a) Fellatio
   b) Cunnilingus
   c) Anything less than £100,000
3. **Translate the following passage:**
   "Puella amat Magistrum. Puella vendit fabulum ad tabloides. Magister dismissus est. Slagga ridet via NatWesto."

(You may now turn over).

How They Will Soon Be Related



Nelson Mandela

Graca Machel

Lord Horatio Nelson	King Machete of Rumbabwe
Nelson Rockefeller	Prince Machel of Kent
Rocky Mandela	Princess Machete of Mozambique
Nelson Riddle	Princess Graca of Monaco
Manfred Mandela	DH Lorenzo-Marques
Mandela Rice-Davies	Karl Marx
Amandela Iannucci	Karl Machete
Winnie Macbetha	His Excellency the Life President of Rumbabwe Samoza Machete
Necklace Mandela	Graca Machete
Nelson Mandela	Glenys Kinnock

WHAT YOU WILL SEE IN THE EXCITING AND COMPLETELY DIFFERENT
EYE ON SUNDAY

NEWS EYE A section with news in it.
EYEVIEW Lots of views from various people.
EYE ARTZ Stuff about the arts.
EYE LIFE Lifestyle things.
EYE BIZ Business
EYE THROWAWAY A section to put in the bin.

PLUS new star columnists including **Cameron McSnoddy**, **Ian Grott**, and award-winning voice of the Orkneys Observer, **Norris McSheep-shagger**, who will give the Eye a distinctive non-metropolitan feel as he wanders around the Isle of Hoohee in his anorak.

DON' T MISS THE ABSURDER

(Shurely Eye On Sunday — Ed)

The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

Monday

I have come back from my holiday in a very good mood indeed. I am on top of the world. From now on everything is going to be different. For a start I am going to take over running the government by myself. My policy is one of

- leading from the front
- hands-on
- top-down
- me totally in charge
- Mr Heseltine not.

All my ministers are going to be told that from now on it is me who is going to have the ideas. In future they should come to me before they do or say anything. In this way, we shall draw a line under everything that has happened up till now and I shall win the next election single-handed i.e.

- hands down
- top off
- on my own
- ...er...
- that's it.

Tuesday

I decided to begin my new style of government by telling Mr Heseltine in no uncertain terms how things are going to be from now on. Unfortunately his red light was on all morning, so I could not get in to see him until late afternoon.

I think he is losing his grip. When I went up to his desk he scratched his head and said "Remind me, who are you?" I felt sorry for him. He is obviously getting very old. One cannot have such a man running the country, which he is not, because I am. Oh yes.

I was just trying to tell him that I am now the hands-off eyes-down top dog on the block, when he pushed an invoice into my hand saying "Get Clarke to pay this, will you? Apparently I've libelled some grotty little journalist." The bill was for £86,000. Obviously I will have to explain to Mr Heseltine my plan to take over the government when he is less busy.

Wednesday

Today was a very historic day indeed. I have invaded Bosnia. Luckily I remembered that when they put the new door into Mr Heseltine's office, they had put my *Daily Telegraph* map of the world in the cupboard where I keep my Bastard books. So I got it out and spread it out on my desk, like Mr Churchill in the war. In my lunch break I went to Ryman's and bought some little pins with coloured tops to show where all the bombs had fallen. While I was laying them out Mr Portaloo came in, very excited. "It is a historic day" he said. "I know" I replied, "I have already said that in my diary." That put him in his place, and showed who is in charge, i.e me and not Mr Heseltine, and certainly not Mr Portaloo who is only Mr Heseltine's defence secretary. "By the way" I asked him, "why have we decided to invade now?" "Everyone agrees that it is the only possible course of action" he said. "Then why have we waited three years to do it?" I asked, quick as a flash. Mr Portaloo looked very embarrassed, and said that it wasn't his idea. He was only obeying orders from above. "Ah" I said, "Mr Heseltine?" "No" he said, "even higher than that. From Mr Clinton."

Thursday

I am very glad to see from the *Daily Telegraph* that our bombs have all succeeded in hitting important Serb targets. These include:

1. Group of fir trees near to Serb positions.
2. Important cowshed of vital strategic value to the enemy, containing 2 cows (probably Serb).
3. 1 very important wheatfield.

This is a very good start, but we must keep up the bombing until the Serbs agree to the Vance-Owen plan (revised 1993, 1994, 1995), the details of which Mr Hurd was the only person ever to understand. I went to look for it in my cupboard, but there was only a note saying "All important files removed to office of M.H."

Friday

Today is an even more historic day. It marks the first anniversary of my greatest achievement, bringing a lasting peace to Northern Ireland. My lasting peace has already lasted a year, which in my judgement is a not inconsiderably long time. As I told my wife Norman over our breakfast of Multi Cheerios and EC-approved square croissants, "the longer it lasts, the more likely it is to last longer". "Just like you" she said, which in my view was a considerably silly remark. Fortunately my brilliant new party chairman Mr Mawhinney came in with some very cheering news. He was waving a copy of the *Daily Mail* with the headline "Blair Finished — Poll Tonic For Tories". This clearly showed that Labour's lead had been dramatically cut from 57 points to only

56. And a half. Mr Mawhinney thought it was all due to his tough speech about Labour councils putting up statues of hippopotamuses. But I knew that it was really thanks to my new top-down policy of driving in the fast lane with the top down, my hands on the wheel and no one in the back seat telling me what to do, particularly not Mr Heseltine. The result of the next election now seems inevitable.

Saturday

Mr Mawhinney has been accused of "running scared" because he is trying to get a different seat at the next election.

"That's not true" he told me, "I am entirely confident in our electoral appeal. I just want to prove that Tories like me can win safe seats as well as marginal ones". I was greatly reassured by this.

Sunday

Mr Blair has stolen yet another of my not inconsiderably brilliant ideas i.e. telling his party to back him or else they will lose the election. When I mentioned this to Mr Portaloo on his way in to see Mr Heseltine he said "Tony Blair should be careful. A Party can end up backing the leader and then losing anyway".

This was very supportive of him and shows that my top-down approach is beginning to work its way up as far as Mr Portaloo.

Birthdays today

Major-General Hugo de la Billiard Table, Commander Land Forces, Easter Island, 79; Dame Prunella De Montfort Waitrose, Prima Ballerina, 96; Sir Isiah Egmont-Frisbee, chairman of BAZ, 64; Rear Admiral Lunchbox-Christie-Mendelson, Equery to H.M. Queen Mother, 103; "Rik", Musician, 17; Susan Scratchcard, Bronze Medallist Women's Coxless Pairs 1972 Olympics, 52; Professor Salvatore Lavazza, Marine Biologist, 67; Joan Collins, Author and Philosopher, 93; Eboah Huntut, Captain of Zaire's Rugby Team, 23; Dr. Roland Spindle, Dean of Semiotics, Hull University, 73; Rachel Cutey, Whitbread Prize Winner 1993, 27; (That's enough birthdays, Ed)

On this day

In 1592, astrologer Sandro Agribaldo discovered the star now known as Terri Major in the Ball Constellation.

In 1883, bareknuckle fighter Peter "Sailor" Ackroyd knocked out Kingsley "Tapster" Amis in 103 rounds in the old Blackfriars ring, London.

In 1907, Blind Lemon Shandy Levinson, the legendary blues player, recorded the track: *"I got those they ain't invented the gramophone yet Blues".*

Poetry Corner

In Memoriam
Carl Giles, Cartoonist

So. Farewell
Then,
Carl Giles.

Famous for your
Cartoons of
English Life.

With the
Infamous "Grandma"

And all the
Others.

Mum, Dad
Etc.

Yes, for half
A century you
Epitomised
The Daily Express

Now, alas,
You are dead.
As is the
Daily Express.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

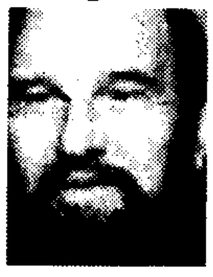
Great Bores of Today

"...This is a British Telecom announcement the number you have called has not been recognised the code for Presleydale has been changed for three figure numbers redial using the prefix 0149623 for four figure numbers insert the digits 827 after the 4. For example if you are dialling Presleydale 373 you should now dial 0148279623 and then the number if however the Presleydale subscriber has taken the number after June 6th the number it now falls under Wisleydale if your phone has a squash function press squash followed by 779 for the new Wisleydale codes British Telecom has not charged you for this call. This is a British Telecom announcement the number you have called has not been..."

St Cake's

Legover Term begins today. There are 412 policemen in the school. Inspector Knacker (CID) is Head of Investigations. Mrs Shorthand-Typing (Dulwich) is Chief Harassee. Miss S. Cort-Agency (Charterhouse) is First Hooker. The headmaster, Mr R. Kipling, is to take a permanent sabbatical on the grounds of health. There will be a performance of "No Sex Please, You're the Headmaster" in the School Office on 21 November. Hands will be run over Totty's Bottom on 6 December Emissions will take place on 23 December. The Governors will meet every day for the next week, followed by a press conference on 12 September. Tickets from the Bursar, Brigadier Ratko Mladic (OC). The OC Grand Lodge Annual Dinner will be held in the Guppy Suite at the Forte Crest Lodge Hotel, Walsall on 15 December. The Imperial Groper, A.J. Mousemat (Windows 93-95) will preside, assisted by the Master Stoatweaver of Jerusalem, W.W.W. Modem (Anoraks 1921-6). The stripper will be Mrs Cynthia Modem, who will perform in aid of the St Cake's Information Technology Appeal.

Royal friend Tara arrested



TARA

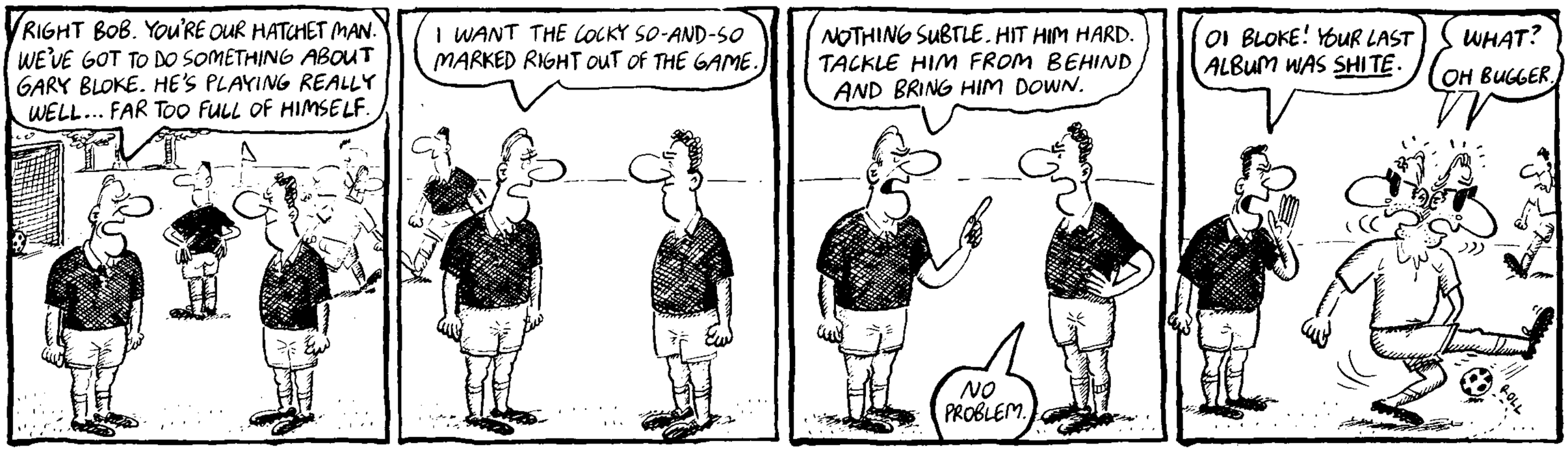
A CLOSE friend of Prince Charles, Tara Palmer-Tomkinson, has been breathalysed and arrested for suspected speeding. Heiress Tara, 23, daughter of Charles's skiing partner Patti Palmer-Tomkinson, was pulled over in her sports car as she drove along the Chelsea Embankment in London.

Weekly Express

(N.Z. edition)

Celeb

LIGGER


RIGHT BOB. YOU'RE OUR HATCHET MAN. WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT GARY BLOKE. HE'S PLAYING REALLY WELL... FAR TOO FULL OF HIMSELF.
I WANT THE COCKY SO-AND-SO MARKED RIGHT OUT OF THE GAME.
NOTHING SUBTLE. HIT HIM HARD. TACKLE HIM FROM BEHIND AND BRING HIM DOWN.
NO PROBLEM.
OI BLOKE! YOUR LAST ALBUM WAS SHITE.
WHAT? OH BUGGER.
ROLL

WORLD OF SOCCER

COHEN BLASTS KLINGFILM IN NEASDEN SHOCKER

by E.I. Erewego, Our Man With The Bottle Of IrnBru And A Healthrite Yoghurt Bar *(shurely shome mishtake?)*

THE SOCCER world was rocked to its foundations when Neasden chairman and launderama-to-launderama magnate Brigadier Buffy Cohen responded to an astonishing attack on him by former Neasden striker Adolf Klingfilm in top German news magazine *Der Führer.*

Klingfilm, 49, had described his one-time boss as "a man with no ambition who knows nothing about football and whose only interest is in launderamas."

Sugar Baddy

But yesterday Cohen hit back on "Good Morning Neasden FM" *(hosted coincidentally by his daughter, DJ Roxanne Cohen)*

"Klingfilm is utterly useless. That's why I bought him. The Germans are now welcome to him — I wish Dynamo Nuremberg all the best with this bastard."

Tottenham Court Rogue

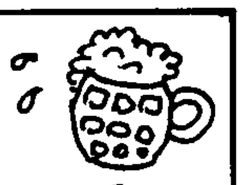
Cohen continued "As for the charge that I know nothing about football the results speak for themselves."

Late Score

North Circular Relegation League

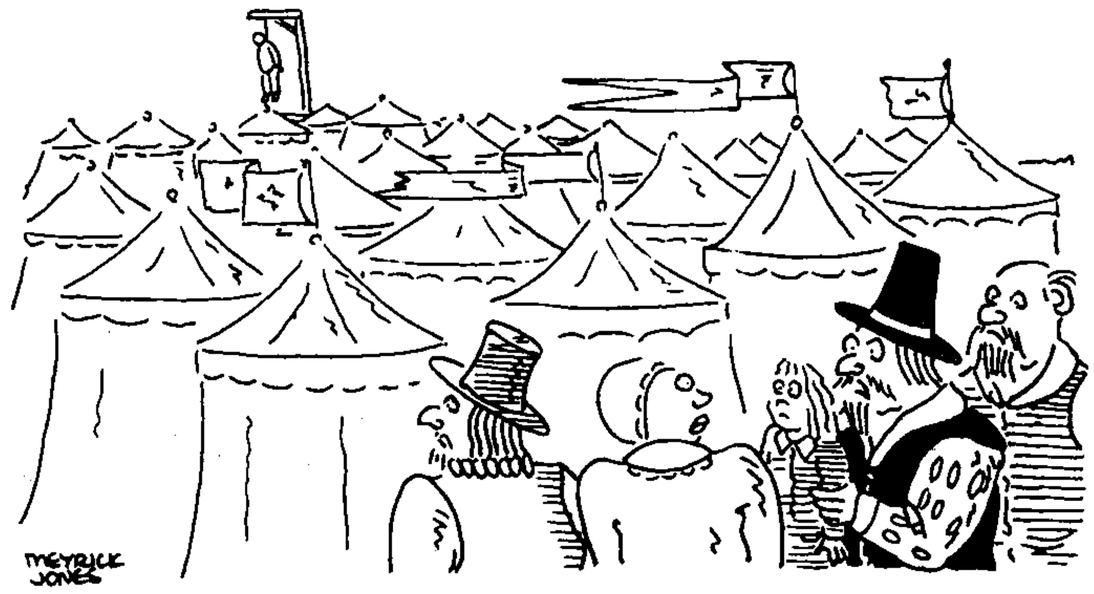
Neasden Bhagovad Gita
Temple Wanderers 5
(Vishnu 1, Shiva 1, Khali 1, Naipaul 1, o.g. Pevsner)
AFC Neasden 0

JUST OUT FROM GNOME-TEL!



Professional Rugby Songs

Including: ● ***We're In The Money*** ● ***Money Makes The World Go Round*** ● ***Money Money Money*** ● ***Four and Twenty Financial Advisors Came Down From Their Head Office In Inverness*** ● ***Buy Low, Sweet Harriet (Sell High)*** *(That's enough songs. Ed)*



"Bloody corporate hospitality tents – they ruin it for the ordinary fan"

FRONT-RUNNERS IN THE GREAT ULSTER-UNIONIST RACE FOR THE TOP

by Our Northern Ireland Correspondent **Lunchtime O'Rangemen**

THE World of Ulster politics was rocked to its foundations today by the news that Ken McShankhill, 67, Ulster Unionist MP for Mid-Antrim and South Tyrone, has thrown his bowler hat in the ring in the competition for the hottest job in Ulster politics.

Since the shock resignation of 89-year Jim Moulinex, the cockpit of the Northern Irish politics had become a seething maelstrom of smoke-filled rooms, as the giants of the Ulster Unionist Party fight it out for the coveted title of Ulster's Mr Big.

Fever Mounts

These are the front-runners in what they are calling Northern Ireland's "tussle of the titans":

● **The Rev. Ron Stormont, 73, MP for North Down and Clegg South, a hard-line moderate who believes in "no surrender" at any price.**

● **Dave Trigger, 23, MP for Drumbashin, a moderate hard-liner who is advocating a policy of "no surrender" at any price.**

Two of the top candidates

● **The Rev. James McBlobbie, 69, MP for Ballymurder, an implacable opponent of the peace process who takes a controversial "no surrender" stance.**

● **Ken McGorbal, 72, MP for Barrymore North, extremist moderate who favours dialogue with other Unionist parties but "no surrender".**

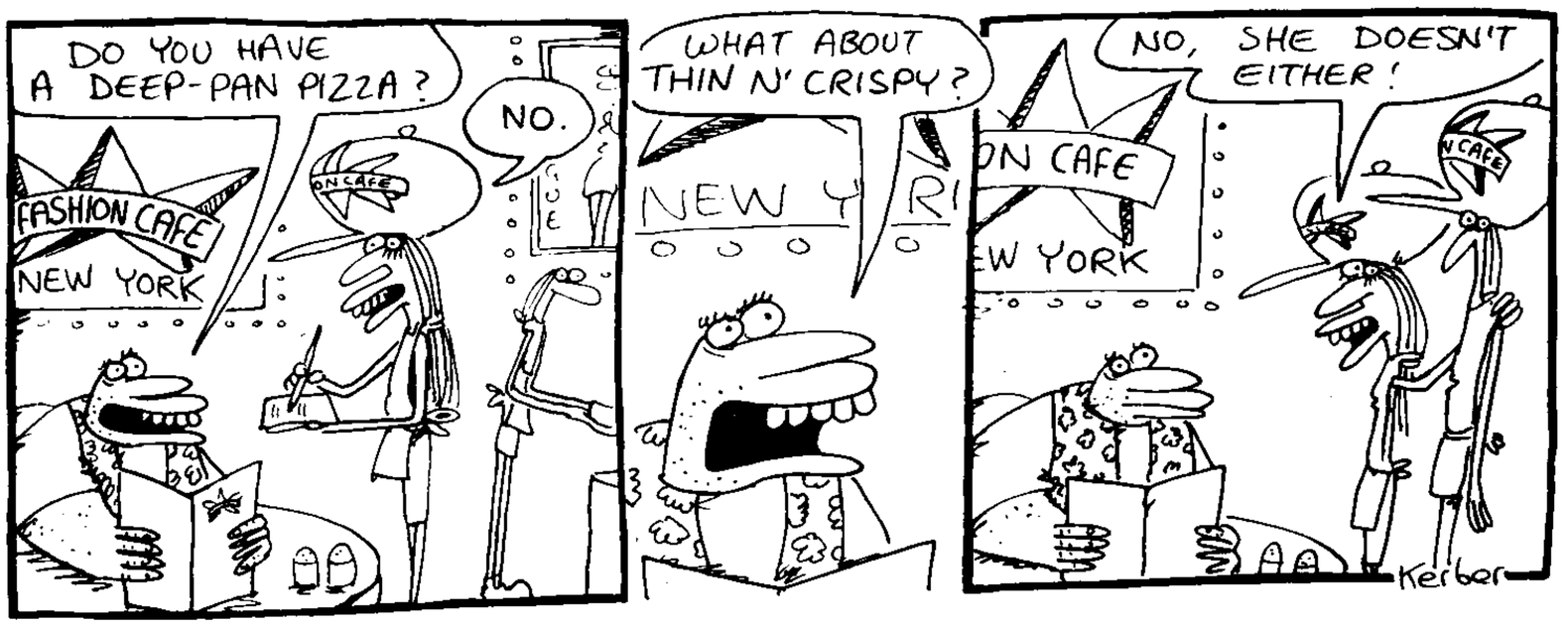
Hysteria Grows

This brings the number of candidates for leadership of the 5-man party to five.

Experts predict that if every MP votes for himself on the first ballot there will be a stalemate.

SUPERMODELS

Neil Kerber



JOHN COLE writes

Hondootedly Mostah James Molineaux cot among the pigeons makropoulos case abracadabra lilli bulero lill marlene political hot potato blarney killarney tipperary question mark over peace process pardon me boy is that the chattanooga choo choo track 29 or you can give me a shine close ron thing *(contd. p.94).*

Price Free

THE TIMEZ-Z-Z-Z

First with the Snooze!

Friday September 8 1995

Windoze '95 Fever Grips World

BY OUR DULL STAFF ANNA RACK

The whole world was today reeling with the launch of Windoze '95, an extraordinary new product which makes people fall asleep at the very mention of it.

From Bejing to Basingstoke, from the Kalahari to Calcutta, from Nebraska to Neasden (*get on with it — Ed*) people were literally nodding off in the streets as Windoze '95 hit the shops in the biggest marketing blitz in the history of the universe.

There have been reports of people fighting to stay awake from every major city in the globe and in some countries people have been going to sleep all night in the grip of what they are calling "The Windoze Phenomenon".

"It's amazing" said the founder of Microsnore, Mr Bill Gatezzzz. "I had no idea the product was so boring. It will change everyone's lives because no-one on earth will be left awake."

Today's edition of *The Times* was paid for by you as you shell out eighty quid for something even more floppy and useless than *The Times*.

CALVIN KLEIN DEFENDS "CONTROVERSIAL ADVERTS"

By our Media Staff
Jane Far-Too-Thynne

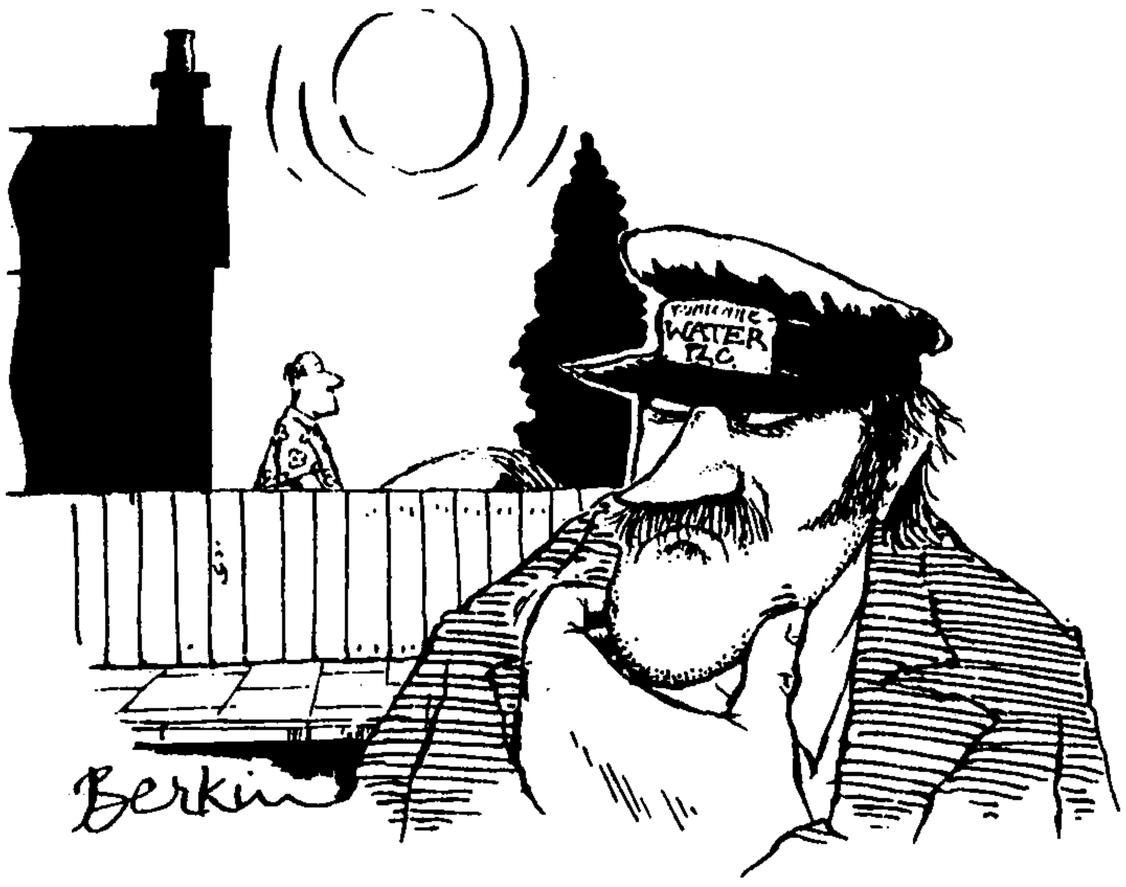
A SPOKESMAN for Calvin Klein yesterday denied that its new advertisement was in any way offensive or contravened standards of decency and good taste.

He said "The poster clearly shows a couple of underage children posing in a sexually provocative manner. There is no mention of over-priced jeans at all."

"If people automatically associate an innocent bit of kiddie porn with cynical clothing manufacture," he continued, "then its their problem."

"You would have to be pretty sick" he concluded, "to link honest paedophilia with the sleazy world of designer fashion."

Kate Moss is 11.



ADVERTISEMENT

ROYAL NATIONAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

A Midsummer Night's Dream

by William Shakespeare

"A stunning new production"
SUNDAY TIMES

"Innovative, exciting and exhilarating"
THE GRAUNIAD

"Unmissable"
TIME OUT

RNSC

At the Young Barbican from September

So it catches errors that other programs miss. And it doesn't bother you by constantly pointing out mistakes that are perfectly correct.

Windows publicity

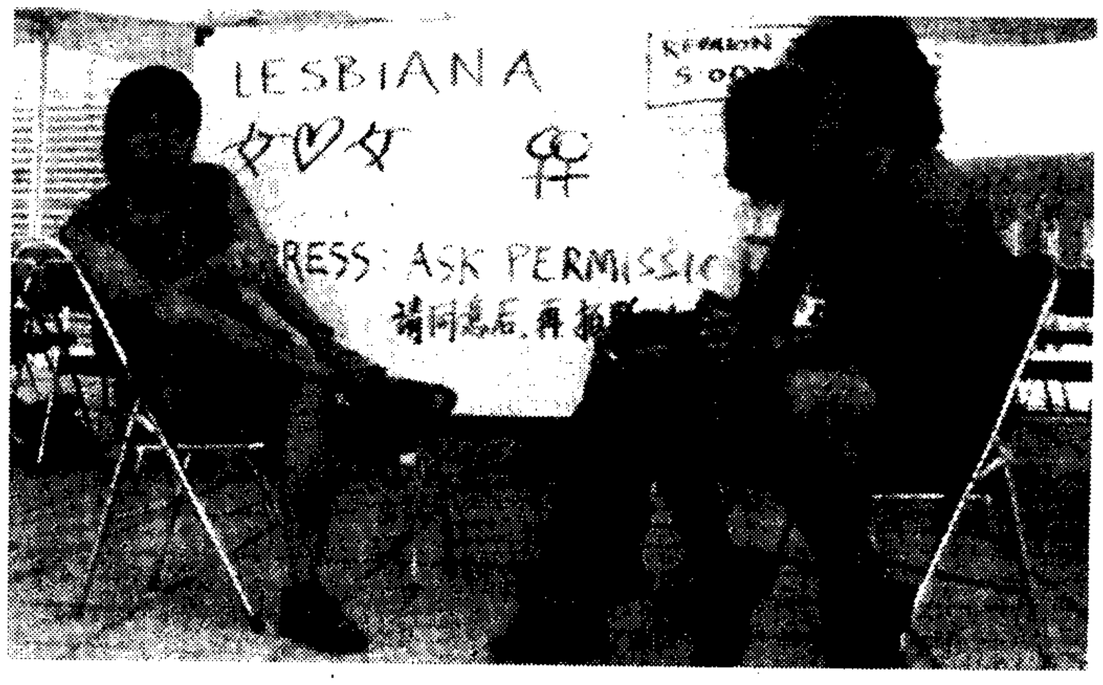
This opportunity to try *The Times* at no cost for a day continues the policy of encouraging non-readers to sample the finest journalism in Britain.

The Times

UN WIMMIN'S WORLD CONFERENCE

A Private Eye Takeaway Souvenir

Top Eye writers give their view of the conference that is going to change the world



GLENDA SLAGG in Bejing, Tuesday.

Hats off to Deng Xio Ping! The guy with the big heart and the little red book, who's given us girls the chance to come here and sort out all the world's problems once and for all!?

Forget the Western whingers and the Tianamen squares (Geddit?) a-droning and a-groaning about human rights.

Deng, baby, you may be 106 and already dead. But the women of the world salute the chainsmoking chairman who's given us all the chance to visit the greatest little country in the world!!?

China. What a dump?!!
Talk about Deng Xiao-Ping??
There's no shop-ping here! Geddit??
Just two minutes in down-town Bejing and you're screaming for M & S!!
Blimey! You can keep your bird's nest soup, Mr Dung — give us girls a decent Boots or a branch of Body Shop any day!!
The hotel doesn't even have a bidet, for gawd's sake!?!
Why oh why is this conference being held in this third-world hellhole, instead of N-o-o-o York, where womens' rights include the right to go to Macy's and have air-conditioning in our rooms at night??!?

Here they are — Glenda's Chinese crackers!!!

- **Fou Tsong** — fou, wot a scorcher!?!
- **Harry Wu** — he's the human rights protestor, stoopid — he can come and woo me any time!!?
- **Tim Yeo** — you can come round to my place and play with my yo-yo — geddit??!

Sayonara — as we old Chinese hands say!?

DEIRDRE SPART *(from a camp-site 30 miles outside Bejing) Monday.*

Yet again we have witnessed the sickening spectacle of a totally male-dominated Fascist establishment — i.e Communist China — trampling on the basic human rights of ordinary working women, i.e me and my fellow members of the Brightlingsea and Rottingdean Lesbian Collective Against Veal Exports and Ostrich Imports.

Last night when we attempted to stage an All-women Circle Dance in one of their rice fields to demonstrate our solidarity with all the women who are working for peace everywhere in the world, the brutal male oppressors, i.e. a gang of over two Chinese policemen, sickeningly and brutally asked us to move on, thereby denying us the sort of basic human rights that we take for granted in the patriarchal fascistic prison camp that is Britain under Major, er *(contd. p.94)*

A Chinese Rickshaw Driver (Sid Wong, bicycle no. 10,412,612,286) discusses an issue of topical importance.

This week: The UN's Women's Conference.

● Brimey, gov. Wot's this all about then? All these women coming over here with their funny ideas. In the old days we used to bind their feet. Pity it wasn't their mouths! I say women should be put down at birth, like we do over here. It's the only language they understand.

I had that Pelegrine Worsthorne in the back of my rickshaw the other day. He took down everything I said and put it in the *Sunday Tereglaph*. **Bruddy good broke!**

THE ALTERNATIVE ROCKY HORROR SERVICE BOOK

No. 94 The 9 O'Clock Nudes Service For Young Persons

President *(Rev. Chris Brain, for it is he):* Hi pop-pickers!

Here there shall be the flashing of stroboscopic lights, the rushing of dry ice and the playing of very loud popular dancing music (it may be the rap, the techno, the acid house or some similar rhythmic noise).

Congregation: Hi, go for it Reverend.

THE COMMUNION

There shall now follow a celebration of the Eucharist in which the Bread and Wine shall be replaced by the Big Mac and Milkshake (or it may be the Chicken McNuggets and the Diet Cola).

The President: Take away or eat here?

Congregation: Aren't there any fries?

The President: Have a nice day!

THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

The President: Take off your clothes.

All: We take them off.

Pres: Not you men.

There shall now follow a healing ministry involving a massage with holy oil.

Female members of congregation: Oo, you are awful — but we love you.

President: As Our Lord himself said to Mary and Martha, who lived with him, "If you love the Lord, do my laundry and hoover the flat. Then take your kit off and we'll pop upstairs for a bit of counselling."

Here ends the reading.

Pres: This is the word of a sex-crazed lunatic.

All: Praise be to thee, O Chris!

The Bishop: I think that in a very real sense what has happened here tonight has helped a great many young people to see that the church isn't just some boring, out-of-touch institution, out of touch with today's world, but a really happening place, just like one of those rave parties that we read about in the *Daily Telegraph*.

Hymn (From the Sheffield Top 100 Hymns For Today's Exciting, Relevant World) to be sung with electric guitar accompaniment. "Abed With Me"

Pres: That's the end of the Nine O'Clock News. And now a look at the weather with the Rev. Michael Fish.

© The Church of Ecstasy, Carey and Sharey Productions.

ADVERTISEMENT

SEMPER N DESPERANDUM

The University of Neasden

(Formerly The Ikea Polytechnic at Brent Cross)

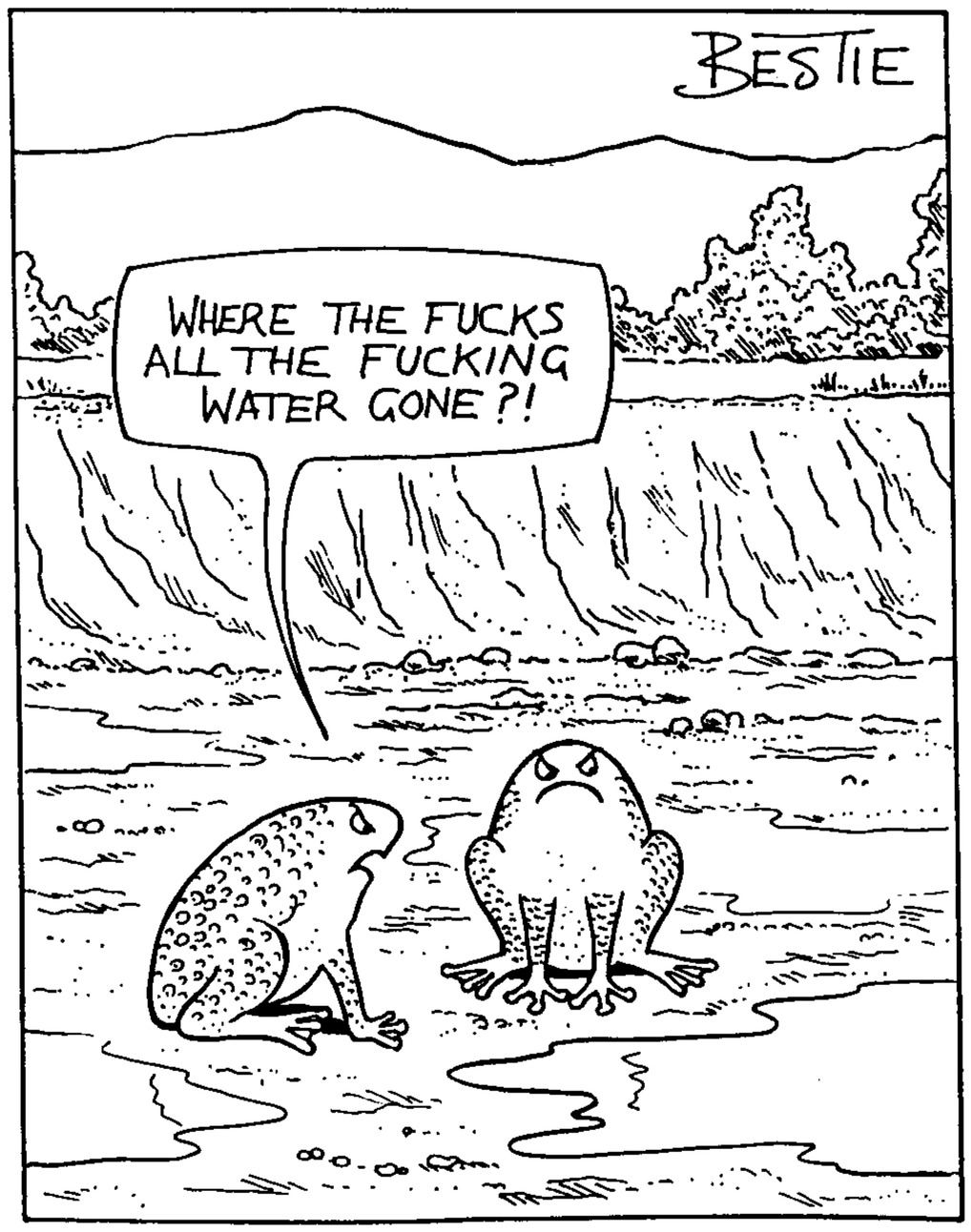
The Faculty Heads of the University hereby give notice that there remain a small number (25,000) of places available for students on the following modular courses for the Academic Year commencing September 1995.

- Animal Rights Studies
- Cycling Proficiency
- Microwave Cookery (*Advanced from Frozen*)
- Motorway Cone Engineering
- How to Win the Lottery (All levels)
- Coat Hanger Design
- Potato Crisp Technology
- Gay Geography – Soho 1994-1995
- Afro-Caribbean Computer Studies
- Feminist Brass Rubbing (1426-1432)
- Washing Your Hair

Applicants for the above courses *(or any others they can think of)* **must** have a minimum of no 'O' levels or 'A' levels. They should apply at once to the Admissions Tutor, University of Neasden, PO Box 724, North Circular Road, Neasden.

The first 25,000 applicants will receive a free mobile phone, a two-week holiday voucher for the Greek island of their choice (*Kos*), a night out with Michael Barrymore (*subject to availability*) and a year's supply of their favourite leisure drug.

HURRY, HURRY, HURRY WHILE PLACES LAST



RESERVOIR FROGS

IS "LORD LOONEY" GUILTY?

You give your verdict

Eye readers are invited to decide whether the 94th Earl Looneygrave, brother of top Tory toff William Looneygrave, tried to murder his wife Lady Ludmilla Looneygrave.

The story so far

The sleepy Somerset village of Chewy Minton had seen nothing like it since the Wars of the Roses — and we don't mean the chocs.

This was the timetable of terror at Looneygrave Hall:

8.36 am. A plainly petrified Lady Petronella Looneygrave rings the local bobby, PC Blobby, screaming "Help, help, he's trying to bump me off".

8.37 am. The call is referred to Taunton, 35 miles away.

11.42 am. Within hours Inspector Scrumpie arrives on his bicycle at the ivy-clad 18th century toff's mansion of the Looneygrave family *(motto: Semper Bonkers, Semper Barking)*.

12.15 pm. The following conversation then ensued:

Inspector: Hello, hello, what seems to be the trouble?

Lady Looneygrave (nee Slagg, formerly a distinguished contributor to the prestigious London *Evening Standard*): He tried to murder me, didn't you darling?

Man with beard (94th Earl Looneygrave, for it is he): Oh I say, that's going a bit far. It was only meant to be a joke.

Lady L: No it wasn't.

Lord L: Yes it was.

Lady L: Wasn't.

Lord L: Was. I'll kill you if you don't shut up.

Lady L: Ha, ha, ha.

The happy couple then posed for photographs with their delightful children Punchinello, 7, and Wortleberry, 5.

Make your mind up now and tick the box of your choice below.

☐ **Yes, the beardie did it.**

☐ **No, she's out to lunch.**

Ring Sun "Looney Trial" on 0892-424424.

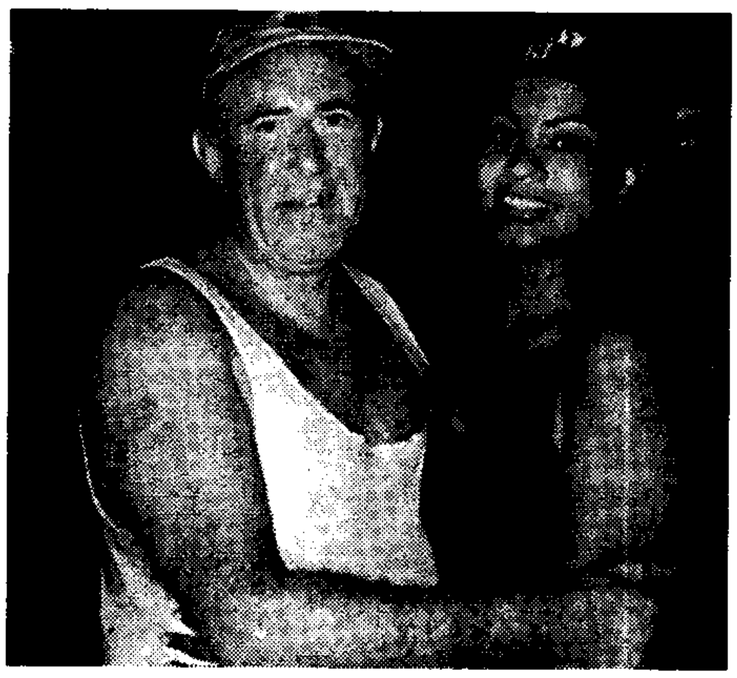
TV HIGHLIGHTS *C4 8.30 Aliens*

Is this picture a fake — or the most astonishing evidence that aliens have not only invaded the earth but are going to get married?

Experts have subjected this picture, which it is claimed was taken in South London in 1995, to exhaustive scientific analysis.

"The figures appear to be almost humanoid" says Professor Karl J. Toesucker of the University of New Dworkin, "but there is something very dubious and bogus about both of them."

DIARY



ANDREW NEIL

Good to see you!

Hypocrite of the week (1): Prince Harry

Prince Harry is a young man born with a silver spoon in his mouth. His family lacked for nothing. Magnificent homes. The finest cars. Ordinary folk waiting on them hand and foot. Expensive foreign jaunts. A toffee-nosed private education. The best meals that money could buy.

And where, you may ask, has that got him?

This week, he was pictured by a leading newspaper walking along with a shoelace undone. Completely and utterly undone.

So where's the pomp and ceremony in that, eh?

Harryshoelacegate is destined to be seen as one of the most shameful episodes in the history of our Royal Family. Once they were the pride of the nation. Now they are a family of scruffs, too damn lazy even to keep their shoelaces properly tied.

And who's interested in them any more, anyway?

Not me, and that's for sure. Like most ordinary folk, I have better things to do with my time than worry about whether Prince Harry's shoelace is done up or not.

And it's about time the self-deluding younger Royals recognised this fact.

Luvviewatch: So Pierce Brosnan is the new James Bond. Tall. Young. Handsome. And hairy.

Pardon me while I yawn.

Isn't it time the tired old producers of this long-running 007 series got in touch with reality? And isn't it also time they realised that women today have grown sick to the back teeth with this type of traditional hero?

The modern women prefers her hero a little more sophisticated and powerful. A mature man, with more experience of life than Mr Brosnan. And a good deal less get-in-the-way hair. A man who as editor of THE leading Sunday newspaper, added an extra 150 pages a week to throw away. A figure of national importance who many people can still remember. A man with wide experience of American television pilots. The kind of guy — a Scotsman, say — who likes skiing, setting the world to rights and beautiful young damsels — but not necessarily in that order!

I write this dressed immaculately in a dinner jacket and bow-tie. In my right hand, I am smoothly holding a revolver. As I say, it's high time for a brand new 007.

Are you thinking what I'm thinking?

Hypocrite of the Week (2): The pampered fat cat

I write this beside the heated pool of my own private villa on the Cote d'Azur. A lovely bikini-clad dusky young lady frolics in the water. And will continue to do so for the duration of her contract. Close friends and colleagues — many of them VIP business contacts — discuss the international affairs of the day over a refreshing bottle of the local vino, which comes in a choice of colours. On their departure, they will sign my hi-tech computerised visitors book, enabling me, at a glance, to learn their names for future reference. So all is right with the world.

Or is it?

Of course not. Not while in their sun-soaked hideaways all over the world British Establishment toadies turn their backs on their own country to lounge beside their expensive foreign pools. The Establishment has turned Holidays-for-the-Boys into an art-form. Fat paypackets guarantee a few privileged folk on six-figure salaries get to grab all the best Euro-villas while the ordinary democratic voter is left to eke out an honest penny at home.

The system stinks. We voters deserve better.

And isn't it about time these pampered fat-cats stopped telling the rest of us what to think? Call this democracy? With my good friends and close colleagues Michael Winner and Robert Sangster and David Frost, I aim to create a bold new society, a society in which first-time voters will be free and happy to turn into people like us.

I'm an outsider, and don't you forget it, baby. I'm unique in having been the only non-Oxbridge editor of a national newspaper, apart from Harry Evans of the *Sunday Times* and Charlie Wilson of *The Times* and Ian Jack of the *Independent on Sunday* and David English of the *Daily Mail* and, oh maybe one or two others, but they don't coount because they're not real *outsiders*, are they?

Everywhere I go, I'm told that more and more people are saying I'm paranoid and vengeful. If I ever find out who these people are who are plotting to destroy me I'll stick the knife in and give them the humiliation they so richly deserve. So just watch it — and that means you too, OKAY?

Hypocrite of the week (3): Millions watched my television programme "Is This Your Life?" last week. And witnessed my fearless confrontation with a new born babe.

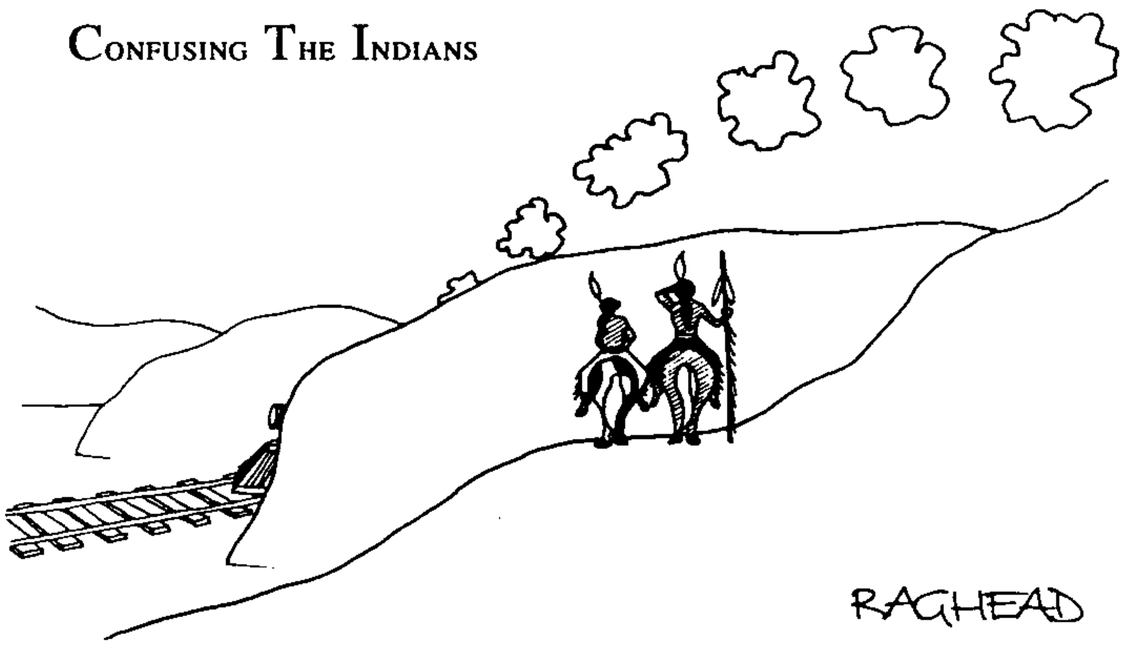
"What on earth gives you the right to come into the world?" I asked of this little wimp. Ouch! That took the wind out of his sails. You could tell that he knew he was rumbled. My question was met with a pathetic gurgle. I then asked the baby to explain just how he came to be spotted stark naked on a table by a close friend of his family. At this point he began to cry. "And we have had a number of complaints that whenever you are confronted with the truth you retreat into your present self-pity" I countered. *Touché!* He wailed his head off.

There we have it. Game, set and match to this particular interviewer, the only guy who had the courage to tackle the sacred cow of a baby head-on. And so much for the traditional liberal PC pussy-footing of the British Establishment, which shows its contempt for ordinary people by mollycoddling new-born babies right through public school and then into Oxbridge.

You see, I've never been scared of taking on the big guns. From apartments in Kensington, New York and the Cote d'Azur, from exclusive clubs, offices and ski-resorts the world over, on behalf of first the Tory Party, then the Pearson Group, then Mr Rupert Murdoch and now Lord Rothermere, I've trained my Exocets against the wealthiest and most powerful institutions in our society. And don't tell me otherwise. Or you're finished, buddy.

Good to see you!

CONFUSING THE INDIANS



"...Gerbil, Architrave, Clop, Flexulous..."

● Poole Library will be closed for a week from September 4 to 9 inclusive to make access easier for disabled people.

Bournemouth Advertiser

"Joan Ruddock"
"MP"

Seeks Full-Time Maternity Cover for Constituency Assistant for Six Months (from early October 1995). Interviews on 5 and 6 September.

To deal with constituency casework and her dairy.

Grauniad

THE CITY OF LONDON CEMETERY AND CREMATORIUM

PUBLIC OPEN DAY

ON August 4, The Herald carried the wedding report of David Buckland and Catherine Andrews.

Unfortunately, due to a mix-up over names, it stated that Mr Buckland spent his wedding night and honeymoon with Caroline Andrews - the bride's sister and chief bridesmaid.

Alton Herald

Literary Review

Peter's friends

Blake
Peter Ackroyd
(Sinclair Stevenson, £20)

AH, the literary life! The dawn call by the tousled research assistant. The hearty English breakfast. The writing gown in inspirational pink (for further details of Mr Ackroyd's punishing routine, see last month's *Marie Claire*). The darling annual volume — who *wouldn't* want it, eh?

If Mr Ackroyd goes on like this he might just succeed in making authorship a glamorous profession again. But it's not all fun, boys, no indeed, and let me tell you that a little pink number by Yves St Laurent is no substitute for a ticket to the British Museum Reading Room and some brow-creasing application.

"Four years after his innovative masterpiece *Dickens* Peter Ackroyd presents us with his imaginative and eagerly-awaited biography of Blake," the blurb declaims. It's five years, actually; but never mind because Blake is very much Peter Ackroyd's kind of thing. Peter Ackroyd's kind of thing? Well, London, don't you know, and "visionaries" and suggestive abstract nouns. *Dickens* was an impressionist's tea-party: Light, Birth, Death, Birds Caged and Birds In Flight, all made real by the more solid figure of Mr Ackroyd stalking his quarry hither and thither over the dark and turbulent city.

Dickens was a doddle, with libraries full of material to be plundered. With Blake the materials are a little harder to come by, but this hasn't stopped Mr Ackroyd doing his usual exhaustive research. And it is exhausting. Paragraph after paragraph reveal the extent of Ackroyd's labour. Thus:

Of Blake's christening: "The font was designed by Grinling Gibbons, it is supported by the tree of life, and the serpent is seen offering the fruit to our first parents, while the sides bear the images of Jesus, the Baptist, St Philip and the ark of Noah" (*I've been to this church*).

Of Blake's solitary childhood: "There is never any mention of shared sports such as football or skating, no games such as prisoner's base or pitch-in-the-hole" (*I've read a book about 18th century children's games*).

Of Blake's apprenticeship to an engraver: "For the next seven years — indeed for the rest of his life — he was surrounded by iron pots for the boiling of the oil, pans for warming the copper plates, tallow candles, racks of needles and gravers, fine linen cloths to strain the varnish, vessels for mixing the aqua fortis used in 'biting in' the plate, old rags for wiping the ink off the plates..." (*I've read another book about engraving techniques*).

Best of all are Blake's walks around London, enthusiastically mapped out with the help of contemporary gazetteers. "The inn had boxes in an enclosure outside, where the customers could drink their tea or their ale, while in the vicinity there were signs that proclaimed 'Steel-traps and spring guns all over these grounds' " We don't know he went there a lot, but we do know about the steel-traps.

Keen as he is to pack in every detail, relevant or not, the occasional connection is top-notch. Ackroyd thinks the abbatoir round the corner from Blake's family house in Golden Square, famous for its female butchers, might have influenced the disembowelment scene in one of the plates of *Jerusalem*. Many of the links, though, are just excuses to bring in earlier Ackroyd preoccupations such as Dickens, Gissing, Hawksmoor. One comparison after another simply refers you back to a previous work by Peter Ackroyd, as when, Blake having been set to work drawing the tombs of Westminster Abbey, "his reverence for the ancient tombs and monuments is akin to that of Thomas Chatterton for the old documents that he discovered in the muniment room of St Mary Redcliffe..." Peter wrote a book about that, too.

If we can pardon Mr Ackroyd for the countless advertisements for himself, it is a bit more difficult to forgive Reed for the calamitous botch it has made of *Blake*. Generally one leaves it to *Spectator* reviewers to bang on about declining standards of book production, but this is a horrible artefact — quarter-inch margins, printed on paper so cheap that the black-and-white illustrations with which the text is garnished show through, notes and index shoehorned in at the rate of three columns a page. There never was a production director who didn't want to save money, but why go to such lengths to render ugly one of the few books that this autumn's trickle of Waterstone's browsers might actually want to buy?

"He's a best-selling novelist."

Ken Pyne

Books & Bookmen

■ MARTIN AMIS, the dentist's friend, was signed up several months ago in the wake of his huge advance from HarperCollins to write book reviews for the *Sunday Times*.

The original deal was for 10 reviews at £3,000 each. However, the deputy editor of the *Sunday Times*, Sue Douglas, regarded this as excessive and took it upon herself to negotiate the sum downwards. Whether it was the professional skills of Amis's agent Andrew Wylie, or a last-minute sense of generosity on the part of Douglas, the final deal was for six reviews at £6,000 each — no doubt a triumph for all concerned.

Ever since an anxious world has been awaiting the arrival of Amis's first six thousand pounder. *Sunday Times* books editor Geordie Grieg even dared to ask Amis what sort of books he wanted to review. "I'm very interested in books about popular cosmology," he teasingly replied.

□ IT WAS only a matter of time before Sir Malcolm "Green" Field, inheritor of the W.H.Smug watered-down chalice from the appallingly snooty and sub-aristo Sir Simon Hornby, would be in trouble.

"Green" was for many years Hornby's sidekick — never really allowed to do anything substantial such as dabbling with books. Wherever Hornby bought his own books it was unlikely to have been at Smug, if only because the range available was and is pathetic.

In every sense Smug shops are the dullest in any high street. Along with axing more than 1,000 staff, "Green" is getting rid of the all-pervading brown colour from fascia boards to uniforms. It is quite remarkable that the chief executive sees no threat from supermarkets when, increasingly, they are commissioning their own lines from packagers and publishers and selling them at virtually give-away prices. With the demise of the net book agreement threatening once more, Sainsbury's and other chains, fearing no competition from Smug, are with relish investing considerable sums in books for the future, titles for adults as well as children.

The truth is that Smug Books has lost its raison d'etre. If you want an intelligent book, you'll most likely find it in the Waterstone's subsidiary.

"Green" plans to spend a piddling £5 million in promoting some new image, including changing the carpets. Five of the working lads from the shop floor have been promoted to the board as executive directors but, typically, no lassies. The future will depend upon whom chairman Jeremy Hardie picks as chief executive to succeed bemused Sir Malcolm in the middle of next year. Hot money is on bullish Richard Charkin, the man who promoted himself out of a real job at Reed — and who'd undoubtedly make a better bookseller than he was a publisher.

'Bookworm'

FOR SALE
APPLY WITHIN
PART FOUR
FOLLOWING THE TAKEOVER WE'RE WORKING ON SOME VERY EXCITING NEW TITLES
FROM NOW ON I'M PRESIDENT OF WORLDWIDE CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT, BOOKPUBLISHING (UK) DIVISION

A LONG LETTER FROM *complete with*

The Editor,
Private Eye,
6 Carlisle Street,
London W1V 5RG

Sir,

I have read with astonishment and incredulity your recent articles headlined "Aitken's CD Past" (EYEs 877 and 878).

The most serious allegation in these articles is that in 1988 the Official Receiver and the Department of Trade and Industry considered taking proceedings against me to disqualify me from all directorships.**[1]** You stated in the EYE 877 article that the concern of these authorities arose because Beaverbrook Investments (Beaverbrook) had purchased in 1986 a company known as Oasis Merchandising Services (Oasis) and because Beaverbrook had taken out a mortgage or floating charge over all the assets of Oasis in 1986. You said that these matters caused the Official Receiver to submit (you did not say to whom) "a fraudulent trading report about Oasis". The general impression given to your readers was that I must have been involved in some sort of wrongdoing or even fraud.**[2]**

There are numerous inaccuracies and misrepresentations in your articles. Please note the following facts which correct the position.

a. I was appointed as a director of Beaverbrook on June 17th 1987. Oasis had been acquired by Beaverbrook in September 1986 and the floating charge was entered into on September 12th 1986. At that time, September 1986, I was completely unaware of the existence of Oasis and had no knowledge of or involvement in the affairs of Beaverbrook either generally or in relation to Oasis or to the granting of the floating charge.**[3]**

b. You stated that a "fraudulent trading report" was produced in relation to Oasis. I was not appointed as a director of Oasis. I had no involvement whatsoever in the matters, such as the granting of the floating charge, which you say gave rise to this report. These matters took place several months before I became aware of the existence of Oasis.**[4]**

c. At the time when I was appointed as one of two new directors of Beaverbrook in June 1987, the existing directors of Beaverbrook **[5]** gave a warranty that the company's subsidiary Oasis was worth not less than £1.2 million.**[6]**

d. The new directors of Beaverbrook **[7]** subsequently looked into the affairs of Oasis. I visited the company's premises and received an optimistic report on its prospects from the Managing Director, Mr Brian Smith, who believed that Oasis needed further funds invested in it. A Chartered Accountant was therefore appointed to report on the company's financial position. This report indicated that Oasis might have serious financial problems. **[8]** Accordingly a further report was commissioned from the independent consultancy company 3i's.**[9]** The contents of this report led the Board of Beaverbrook to conclude that no further investment should be made in Oasis and in November 1987 Administrative Receivers were appointed to Oasis.**[10]** In January 1988 Oasis was wound up, not by Beaverbrook as your article stated, but as a result of a petition presented by an unsecured creditor.**[11]**

I hope it is clear from this account that I was not involved in either the purchase of Oasis or the granting of the floating charge over it in September 1986.**[12]** Soon after I became aware of the existence of Oasis on my appointment as a director of Beaverbrook in June 1987, I took responsible steps to ascertain the true financial position of Oasis.**[13]** The second report which the Board of Beaverbrook commissioned into the affairs of Oasis led the directors to conclude that the company was not reasonably capable of being saved.**[14]**

I should also emphasise that at no time has the suggestion ever been put to me, nor has any information been made available to me, that would lead me to suspect that any fraud was perpetrated by any officer of Oasis while I was director of its parent company Beaverbrook.**[15]**

From the foregoing facts, there could not have been any grounds upon which disqualification proceedings as a director could have been contemplated against me **[16]** nor on which a "fraudulent trading report" could have been considered in relation to me. To this day neither I nor the Liquidator of Oasis have any knowledge of the alleged consideration of disqualification proceedings or of the "fraudulent trading report".

As you correctly reported in Eye 878, civil litigation on Oasis on a wholly different matter **[17]** is still continuing. It was initiated by the Oasis Liquidator but speculatively financed by London Wall Litigation Ltd., a company funded by offshore interests who have had no previous connection with Oasis. The Courts have held, at first instance, that such a funding arrangement was unlawful. I regard this litigation as an opportunistic fishing expedition so far as I am concerned and remain confident, on the basis of legal advice, that it will ultimately prove that I acted correctly and properly in relation to Oasis. **[18]**

Finally, may I refute two other allegations made against me elsewhere in Eye 878.

A) I did not discuss Al Yammamah or any matters relating to Saudi Arabia when I saw the Prime Minister at our meeting last month **[19]**.

B) I did not host or even attend "a Commons party just before the recess to help the ambitious legal firm Dibb Lupton Broomhead". **[20]**

I do not know this firm **[21]**, but you can rest assured that I have quite enough ambitious lawyers on my side already! **[22]**

Yours faithfully,

Jonathan Aitken

JONATHAN AITKEN.

Guzzlers' Groupies

■ SO SHOCKED were Anthony Peterson and his wife Marion by the discrepancy between the near-unanimous vote against the British Gas Board "guzzlers" at the BG AGM last May and the crushing majority in favour from faceless institutions that they wrote to several big companies asking which way they voted.

TSB GROUP. Luke March, group secretary, wrote to say these matters "must remain private". When the Petersons angrily retorted that they were entitled to information as shareholders, they got a grovelling reply from Sir Nicholas Goodison, TSB chairman (and former chairman of the Stock Exchange) who grudgingly revealed that TSB (which owns 1 per cent of shares in British Gas) had abstained.

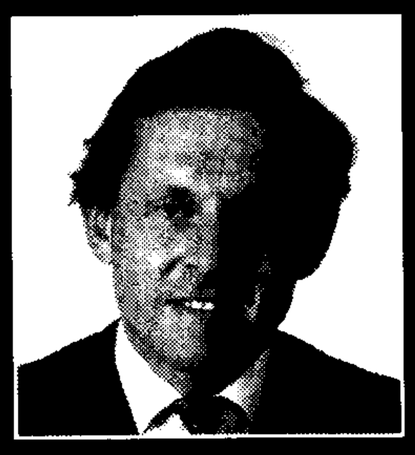
MARKS & SPENCER has more than 500,000 shares in BG and said it voted *for* the gas guzzlers — "as a matter of policy we normally seek to support the company."

EQUITABLE LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY has 0.6 per cent of BG shares, voted *for* the guzzlers and has been wringing its hands about it ever since.

NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL BUILDING SOCIETY has 531,000 shares and tried for weeks to avoid answering the questions before admitting it had abstained.

THE BBC PENSION FUND voted *for*. On 20 June the Fund's chief accountant Martyn Notley wrote to the house magazine *Ariel* to explain that the fund trustees "must put aside their personal view on the ethical or political aspects of a particular investment and seek the best financial return".

Notley's letter was torn to shreds in the following issue by Ian Pollock, of the BBC's economic and business news department, who asked how "the best financial return" could be obtained by shelling out monstrous salaries and bonuses to fat cats on the British Gas monopoly. To the terror of pension fund managers everywhere, Pollock demanded a say for pension scheme members before votes are cast on their behalf.



THE THINGS THEY ADMIT

"Among Conservative MPs, social security spending is seen as a dead hand on our electoral fortunes. We want to give our supporters tax reductions rather than benefits to people who are less likely to vote for us anyway."

Richard ("Three in a bed") Spring, Tory MP for Bury St Edmunds, writing in Money Marketing, *3 August.*

JONATHAN AITKEN MP *footnotes*

1 This was not an allegation, but a fact.

2 In a Department of Trade and Industry minute about Oasis Merchandising Services Ltd, dated 24 March 1988, Mr C.F. Webb, the assistant official receiver, wrote: "I enclose herewith a preliminary fraudulent trading report in the above matter. The report contains allegations of a serious nature involving a public company which held a floating charge over the assets of the company, and the directors of Oasis, which include a prominent Member of Parliament (Jonathan Aitken)".

3 All no doubt true, and in line with the *Eye*.

4 All no doubt true, and in line with the *Eye*.

5 In June 1987 the existing directors of Beaverbrook were two cousins of Jonathan, Tim Aitken and John Kidd, and Jonathan's long-standing business partner Michael Storey.

6 If such a warranty was given, it flew in the face of the known facts. Long before June, an unpublished report by Oasis's auditors was qualified because of doubts about the accounts. A stocktaking exercise the previous January indicated that the stock was heavily overvalued.

7 The new directors who joined the Beaverbrook board in June 1987 were Jonathan Aitken and a Monaco-based accountant called John Hemingway.

8 This accountant was Tim Gibson, a former colleague of Jonathan Aitken at Slater Walker. His report (September 1987) made it clear that Oasis was in serious trouble. The Beaverbrook directors allowed Oasis to continue trading.

9 The 3i report (October 1987) concluded that Oasis was doomed. The Beaverbrook directors allowed Oasis to continue trading.

10 Less than three weeks before administrative receivers went in to the company, the Stock Exchange crash put an end to any remote hope that Oasis might be floated as a public company.

11 The winding up was inevitable after the receivers were put in — by Beaverbrook.

12 True, in line with what the *Eye* reported.

13 True, in line with what the *Eye* reported.

14 No doubt true, in line with the *Eye*.

15 No doubt true — and irrelevant. The relevant point was made in a minute from Graham Horne, the chief examiner of the prosecutions unit at Companies House, to Mr P. Joyce, deputy inspector general of the insolvency department of the DTI, on 30 March 1988. "The official receiver," reported Horne, "alleges that the company's business was continued so that the Aitken's family business — Beaverbrook Investments PLC — was repaid at the expense of other creditors". The allegation was not that Aitken and his fellow directors misinformed themselves about the company, but, on the contrary, that despite their knowledge of its parlous state they let it continue trading for several months, thus losing unsecured creditors more than £1 million.

16 Disqualification proceedings — and a public examination of the MP — *were* very seriously considered by the authorities. They were discussed at length at a high-level meeting about Oasis Merchandising in July 1988 at the Serious Fraud Office. The day after the meeting, Mr Christopher Dickson who was then (and still is) a senior assistant director of the SFO, wrote to Mr Edward Thompson, a senior solicitor at the DTI, with the following account of the meeting:

"We agreed that the official receiver would now look at the case with a view to taking disqualification proceedings against some of the participants. In this connection we all felt that there was a great deal to be said for a public examination of, inter alia, Jonathan Aitken."

The disqualification issue was raised again in a letter from Mr Thompson to Mr Joyce on 2 August 1988. "It was generally felt," he said, "that if the routine inquiries were made and the public examinations held we would then be in a better position to judge as to whether criminal enquiries would be pursued. I do not know whether you are prepared to go along with this, but it seems to me that such a course would be bound to advance the disqualification issue in any event. I gather that Jonathan Aitken is a director of some 30-40 companies and as a consequence it seems to me that any disqualification proceedings are likely to be heavily contested."

Finally, on 5 August, an official receiver, Les Cramp, wrote to Mr Joyce about the Oasis case as follows: "The matter is therefore to proceed by way of a disqualification report, which Miss Milum [Sarah Milum, the investigating officer in the case, now based at Reading] will now put in hand." And there, mysteriously, the matter seems to have ended. No disqualification proceedings were started. The department of trade cannot properly explain why — nor can it say if the disqualification issue was referred to DTI ministers, headed at that time by the secretary of state, Lord Young.

17 The civil proceedings are not "on a wholly different matter" but on exactly the same matter — namely the behaviour of the Beaverbrook directors over Oasis. The proceedings allege that the "new directors" who joined Beaverbrook Investments in June 1987, Jonathan Aitken and John Hemingway, allowed the company to trade long after it was insolvent and are therefore personally liable for creditors' debts of more than half a million pounds.

18 Here Mr Aitken ends his complaint about the two *Eye* articles about Oasis. In all the verbiage, he has identified not a single one of the "numerous inaccuracies and misrepresentations" he alleges.

19 The *Eye* did not allege, but tentatively suggested that the subject of Aitken's meeting with the prime minister might have been the Al Yamamah deals. Perhaps Mr Aitken can tell us what was discussed. Bosnia?

20 Stuart Benson, marketing director of Dibb Lupton Broomhead, confirms to the *Eye* that his firm threw its usual annual lunch beano in the House of Commons on 14 July. He also confirms that Jonathan Aitken accepted an invitation to be the star guest speaker at the lunch. Aitken's name was printed on the invitations. "In the event," says Mr Benson, "the storm about his dalliance — is that the right word? — broke, and he decided it was inappropriate for him to appear at the lunch."

21 Mr Benson was very surprised that Aitken says in his letter that he does not know Dibb Lupton Broomhead. "I spoke to him or his office in the week before the lunch and confirmed the arrangements," he says. "Of course he knew who we were. What a short memory!"

22 One such ambitious lawyer is Aiken's solicitor Richard Sykes. On 18 August, Sykes was approached in the high court by an acquaintance who said he had "seen quite a lot about your client in *Private Eye* recently — they must have someone on to him full time". Sykes replied: "Well, it's all complete rubbish of course. He thought of suing them." The acquaintance asked: "Do you know who's feeding the *Eye*?" Sykes replied: "I only wish we did, but no." On the same day, 18 August, Mr Aitken sent off his letter.

MAGIC WANDLE

■ THE POWER of the *Eye* has no limits.

Barry Gollop and his family were recommended by their council (Merton, south London) to buy a house in partnership with the Wandle Housing Association of Tooting.

They were interviewed and were delighted to be told (on 13 July) that their application had been successful. They found a house they liked and were delighted to be told (on 1 August) that the property was acceptable. They arranged their mortgage and got ready to move.

Whoops! On 24 August came another letter from Wandle. "Due to high demand," it said, there were "no more funds available for this year" so "you will not be able to proceed any further with your purchase".

On Tuesday 29 August, Barry phoned the *Eye*, which fired off a fax to Wandle asking how it could accept someone for its scheme, and then ditch them. On 31 August Debra Lawson, chief executive of Wandle, replied: "Until Friday 25th, we remained confident that funding would be available. Discussions on Friday led us to conclude that this would not be the case."

Wandle seemed to be blaming the Housing Corporation which provides funds for housing associations. So the *Eye* rang the Housing Corporation, whose spokeswoman explained: "Wandle went ahead without checking that we were prepared to provide funds." The corporation was blaming the association, and vice versa. It looked like a classic bureaucratic stand-off with the Gollops and 22 other families stuck in the middle without homes.

Then came the miracle. Within minutes of the *Eye*'s call, the Housing Corporation rang again to announce: "We have just found some slack, some extra money we can give them to sort this out." For once, this story looks like ending happily.

FACT: The government, which is passionately committed to home ownership, has slashed the Housing Corporation funds for housing associations from £1.7 billion last year to £1.2 billion.

A HOME AGAIN: The Gollop family, Clare, Barry, Sean and James

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 0171 287 3183

In the City

LET THE bells ring out and the nation rejoice: not only is Frank Bruno heavyweight champion of the world, but Kevin Maxwell, the son of Cap'n Bob, that other great heavyweight who won the nation's heart, is poised to make a comeback to the world of business.

It was on 3 September 1992 that Kevin Maxwell was made bankrupt with debts of £406 million. So, this week, three years after he became Britain's biggest ever bankrupt, Kevin Maxwell should justly have received his automatic discharge from bankruptcy after serving the required minimum period in purdah. As he has cooperated totally with his trustee in bankruptcy and there being no evidence of assets being hidden from creditors, there is no reason to bar his second business coming.

Bankers and pensioners alike can look forward to the exciting new ventures that will surely be on offer once Kevin's current little legal problem is resolved and he is free to further enhance the Maxwell traditions of profit, probity and philanthropy.

THIS weekend the once great inquisitor "Sir" David Frost is scheduled to provide former Barings trader Nick Leeson from his Frankfurt jail cell with a BBC TV platform to argue, onion in hand, why he should not be tried in Singapore for crimes he admits to committing.

The BBC maintains it has not paid for this interview. Therefore there will be no reason why Frost should not quiz Leeson closely on who is paying Kingsley Napley and his German lawyers. If they are not being paid, what contingency fee arrangements are in place regarding any payments made for subsequent interview, book and film rights meeting his defence bills?

Lawyers do little for nothing and certainly not the amount of work Leeson has so far required. So who will pick up the German legal tab and any future tabs in Singapore or (if he gets lucky) London? If he were returned to Britain to stand trial would he apply for legal aid (*you betcha*), and if so what would happen to the suggested multi-million pay-off from selling his story of how I broke the bank? No doubt that would all be payable after the trial and so not prevent any £1 million-plus legal aid bill.

As criminals are not supposed to benefit from their crimes — and lest we forget Leeson himself says he admitted crimes of false accounting in London if not Singapore, although that would seem a distinction without difference to all but a defence lawyer — just how will the rumoured payments being sought by his agents be paid? Perhaps to the lovely Lisa Leeson, still loyally slaving in the tea room? She is said to have earned £30,000 so far from her storytelling which is reputed to have gone on legal fees.

Frost would also do viewers a favour if he pressed the Singapore spiv on why the British taxpayer should meet the bill for trying and imprisoning a man who was only too happy to earn a six-figure salary as a British tax exile in an offshore tax haven? And he could ask why there should be any sympathy for a man who the evidence clearly shows set out from the start in 1992 to deceive his employers by hiding the account in which he made the losses that brought Barings down so that he could generate large bonuses for himself as well as his greedy bosses.

Whether Leeson will be keen to answer such questions — assuming they are asked — is less than certain. After all, the aim of this first salvo in the second phase of his PR campaign is to win sympathy and generate pressure from gullible MPs and journalists who feel a Leeson trial in Britain will in some way reveal other, more guilty senior Barings suits. As Leeson himself admits there are none and the Serious Farce Office has not found any, the interview seems unlikely to reveal little other than that he, like so many white collar criminals, can do the crime but can't face doing the time.

THE relentless pursuit by malicious hacks — and possibly even the reactivated inspectors from the Department of Timidity and Inaction — of Lord Archer will not cease. It seems there is some evidence of telephone conversations between Archer and a friend at Smith New Court during the run-up to the MAI bid for Anglia TV. No doubt any such calls, if made, were (like all the other conversations in which the great storyteller participated) entirely unrelated to Anglia.

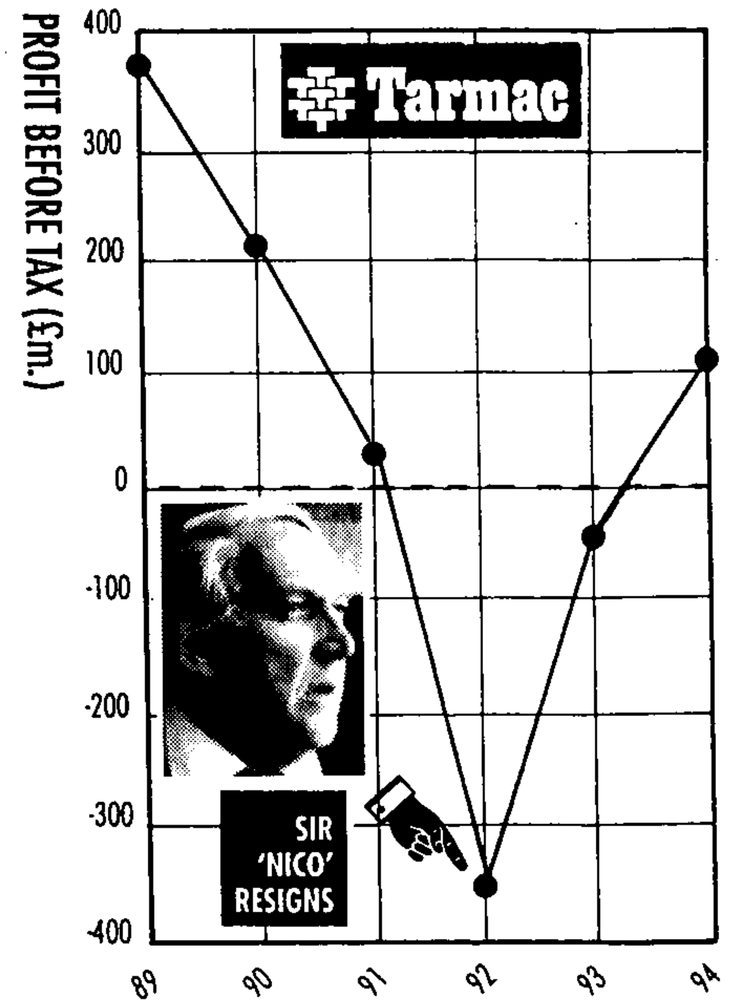
ONE OF the DTI's other great insider-dealing "successes" was the prosecution of County NatWest Securities dealers Russell Kean and Stephen Floyd. The case against them was thrown out at court in 1991. They had always denied insider trading.

Since then Kean has been active in the Essex-based family business Kean Publications, which specialises in telephone selling advertising in very useful magazines, books and directories. Much of this trading is done under the names Winchester and Regent. NatWest is banker to Kean Publications.

Unfortunately it seems that in the past some advertisers have not appreciated the value of these essential publications and were less than eager to pay for a second appearance, while others had no record of ever agreeing to advertise when presented with an invoice. Doubtless these were all due to innocent misunderstandings which Winchester, Regent and Kean Publications have been always only too happy to resolve.

WHAT an amazing coincidence! On 27 August the *Sunday Times* prominently reported on its Business front page that Yve Newbold was leaving her post as company secretary at Hanson to become chief executive of Pro-Ned which headhunts non-executive directors. On the same day the *Sunday Telegraph* also "revealed" this important news while profiling Newbold on its Business back page. Fact: Hanson lover John Jay is city editor of the *Hanson Times*. Fact: Jay lover Judy Bevan (aka Mrs Jay) wrote the profile in the *Sunday Hansongraph*.

British Management Part 25.
SIR NICHOLAS HENDERSON, Keeper of the Privy Seal of the Duchy of Cornwall, former Ambassador to Poland, Germany, France and US. Former director Hambros, Eurotunnel. Director Sotheby's. Director Tarmac plc until 1992.



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1989	£377.0m	1992	-£350.3m
1990	£211.9m	1993	-£43.1m
1991	£21.0m	1994	£107.2m

WHILE awaiting the outcome of the Maxwell trial and the Guinness appeal the Serious Farce Office is trying to recreate a relationship with Scotland Yard and the City police.

Both fraud squads have few cases and even fewer detectives assigned to the SFO with the winding down of the Maxwell and Bank of Credit & Commerce International cases. So much so that the City police are said to be pulling its officers out of Elm Street come December thereby joining the Met on the outside looking in.

Spurred on by the Davie report earlier this year a senior SFO official is now full time at work on both a memorandum of understanding and a services level agreement to define the future SFO relationship with the police. But on the police side there is little confidence that the present SFO high command, some of whom are seen as anti-police, will be able to come up with an agreement which will remove the tensions created by the perceived diminution of the police role by SFO lawyers and accountants to bag carriers not investigators.

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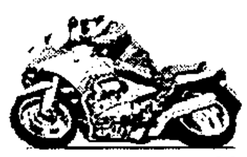

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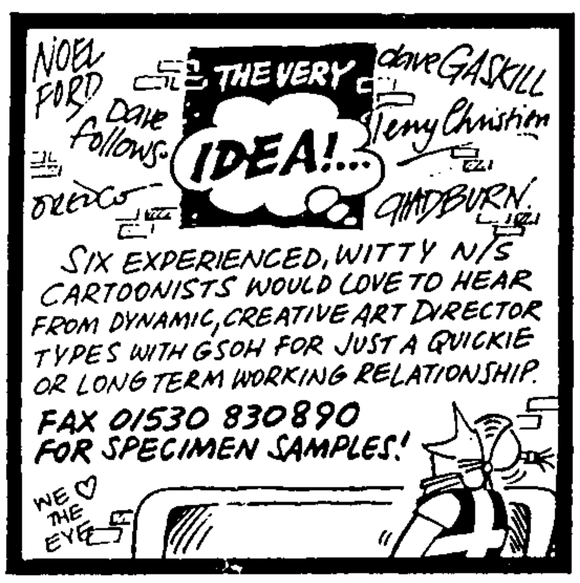
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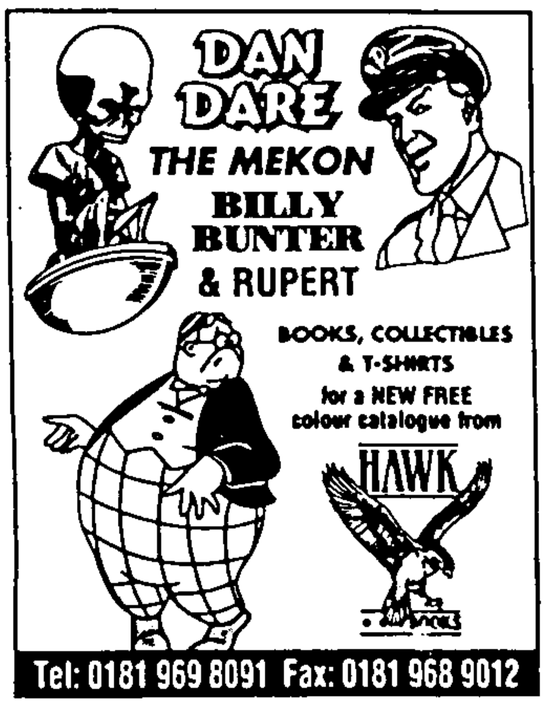

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TUESDAY 12th September

QUOTE

Noel Edmonds – who has bought the rights to The Flowerpot Men, The Clangers and The Magic Roundabout – plans to change the programmes so they will appeal to a new audience. Look out for The Mighty Morphin Flowerpot Men, Sonic the Clanger, plus Bill and Ben's Excellent Adventure.

Sunday Times

ROCHFORD — Together again aRr? Can't be reality don't believe! Talk and see me or no go! No mistakes — no messing about OK. J.S.

THANK YOU. Glean through the specs. Curious. ER. Love, DOTTI.

KATH — I know the score but still thinking of you. SAM.

DEVINE — I love you, H.F. 3.20 pm.

SPEECH WRITING by Mitch Murray. See Page 30.

CARICATURES from photos. 01327 359213

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UNATTACHED, EDUCATED professional man, 40's, with various interests serious and flippant. Seeks sensitive genuine fun-loving intelligent lady for caring relationship. Photo appreciated. North East. Box 4480.

CALM, GENTLE male, 37, fit, painfully normal, practical and thoughtful, seeks bright, slim, honest woman, 25-35, for friendship, fun and happiness. Red hair a bonus! London. Box 1080.

Replying to a PRIVATE EYE Box Number? Address your reply like this:

Box No .....
PRIVATE EYE SMALL ADS
6 CARLISLE STREET
LONDON W1V 5RG

SEX GOD wishes to meet sex goddess...Whoops, wrong mag! Male, 39 WSOH, half a brain, non-smoker, fit, seeks female for fun. Letter and photo would be great. Surrey/London. Box 4380.

BROKENHEARTED in Hampshire village: useful, pleasant-looking guy, early 40s, easy temperament, alone again in my cottage, seeks female in stockings for some company, a bit of fun, a little TLC and lots of sex. Box 1280.

MIDLANDS MAN 40, slim, single, specs, balding, seeks sensual lady for lasting relationship. Age unimportant. Box 1380.

A 35 YEAR OLD Scottish lass with brains, beauty, brass seeks her better half. Box 1480.

LIKE A PEACH on a windowsill. Lovely ripe warm amiable woman. Prime time 40's. Has brains, breeding, big brown eyes, dark curls, gorgeous curvy 38DD figure, a wicked twinkle and a business in the Mediterranean. Achingly needs good-natured grown-up man to laugh at life with. 30-50. Must have powerful shoulders, sensual mouth, smiley eyes and abundant sexual energy. Must be kind, intelligent, relaxed, true, honourable, fun, passionate, successful, financially secure and happy to travel. Photo and birthdate please to Box 1580.

AMOUROUS ANGLO-LATIN man, 37, 5'7", likes theatre, art, opera, seeks affectionate female, 25-43, for exciting sensual relationship. Phone: 0171 723 9899.

BOX 1680 seeks pretty girl in green shorts from the 17.47 train on 20/08/95 from Moreton to Paddington. Why didn't you hijack my taxi?!

GLOVE SEEKS HAND. Box 1780.

COUNTRYSIDE not cars? Musicians not machines? Meals not MacDonalds? Socialising not Segas? Romance not routine? Giggling not gloom? Conversation not computers? Merriment not moaning? Do you demand rigidly defined areas of doubt and uncertainty? Sound like you? 30 year old slim, n/s, attractive male awaits ludicrous and amusing replies from similar females. Oxford/Reading/London. ALAWP. Box 1880.

LOVELY CUDDLY mature warm woman seeks earthbound caring gentleman for committed relationship. N-W. Box 1980.

SPECIAL, INTELLIGENT, slim, career type, headturning lady 25-35 years — sought by good looking dynamic 38 yr old single businessman. Exchange genuine letter and photo. Box 2680.

A GENTLEMAN (aged 36, in London and socially naive) would value the acquaintance of a young lady some 10-20 years his junior. Shyness and awkwardness preferred to self-assurance and vitality. Looks may or may not matter, but conventional beauty is not requested (nor offered). This all probably sounds somewhat sordid, but nothing unwholesomely intimate is envisaged, merely a little correspondence or conversation regarding life, the universe and semi-colons; and, conceivably, the occasional visit to the cinema. Further details available on request. Box 2780.

V. ATTRACTIVE intelligent Irishman (34) seeks to entertain beautiful woman for weekends in Ireland — possible relationship. Photo please. Box 2880.

UNEXPECTEDLY BACK on the market — leftie (heterosexual) lawyer and councillor, smoker, divorced, 45; seeks slim (ish) attractive lady, 30-45, for lasting relationship (whatever that means!). Sense of humour and ability to put up with children some weekends essential — interest in politics optional (ha-ha!). Letter and photo guarantees reply. West Midlands. Box 2980.

FRANKFURT-BASED Arthur Dent, Journalist, 28, Seeks Fenchurch for flying lessons and a pint. Box 4880

INTELLIGENT, FUNNY, caring woman sought for living laughing and hopefully loving by professional succesful London man (45). Tired of being alone. Interests include history and travel. Box 3780

WEALTHY, SUCCESSFUL Businessman, tall, slim, mid 40s in celibate marriage. Seeks attractive, discrete lady with GSOH for long-term realtionship perhaps eventually in sunnier climes. Seize the moment – do it. Photo please. Box 3880

DROP DEAD GORGEOUS short bobbed independent woman, mid 30's wanted for professional male who likes travel, music, theatre, restaurants, foreign films. Good nature, kindness, GSOH essential. Distance no object, south preferred. Photo appreciated. Box 3980.

BROADMINDED Single white male, 32, attractive, considerate, VGSOH. Loves slim, N/S, Black/Asian/Oriental girls. Awaits interesting replies leading to broader horizons, new experiences. Absolutely anything considered! Photo please? Bournemouth/ S.England/ London. Box 4080.

EYE SOLDIER

ATHLETIC army officer seeks slim, attractive female pen-pal (photo?) for warm welcome home from Bosnia. Box 4580.

TWO ARMY PILOTS "Bored in Bosnia". Both officers. Welcome correspondence with a view to future manoeuvres. Photos appreciated. Box 4680.

UNCONVENTIONAL Army officer (27), own brain, teeth and SOH seeks uncomplicated fun with intelligent, sporty, sexy female to restore smiley face. Photo ensures reply. Box 2180.

OPENING LINES

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Opening Lines is an independent telephone dating service.

If you like one of the advertisements, simply dial the number advertised - if you are still interested, leave a message with your telephone number. They could call you back within hours!

Calls to the 0660 numbers cost 39p per minute cheap rate and 49p per minute at all other times

Paravox Ltd, PO Box 230, Walton on Thames, KT12 1YX

PROFESSIONAL MALE, 34, European-Italian, n/s, slim, 5ft 6in, gsoh, good looking, likes classical/rock etc, travelling and cinema, seeks lady with similar interests, for relationship. Ring 0660 206028

I'M 32, A PROFESSIONAL guy with a gsoh, but I'm still single. If you're a caring lady, 25-35 maybe you can help Ring 0660 206026

MODERATELY SUCCESSFUL MIDLANDS musician 41, dosh and wits in abundance, seeks cheerful, practical woman, who prefers Marstons to Malibu, and Mull to Marbella Ring 0660 205377

GREGARIOUS, ATTRACTIVE, SENSITIVE male, 30, wants exciting, challenging relationship with slim, independent, brainy woman, for arts, conversation, good food and drink. Ring 0660 206024

JAPANESE LADY 28, slim, petite, artistic, would like to meet mature, intelligent, successful, smart, stylish gentleman, for good conversation, and maybe romance. Age unimportant. Ring 0660 206007

MIDDLE EASTERN MALE, 24, 5ft 8in, tanned with dark hair, loves reading and has HND in Maths, looking for a lasting relationship with a lady, 18-45. Ring 0660 204681

TALL, GOOD LOOKING male, 22, intelligent, professional, easygoing, seeks attractive, sensual, older woman, 30s-40s, for passionate and fun relationship. Ring 0660 204281

INDEPENDENT, WELL EDUCATED female, 38-52, sought by single male writer, 52, for weekend pleasure, interests classical music, eating out, hiking, literature, sport and history. Ring 0660 204789

LIBRARY LINES

If you can't find the advertiser of your desires here - try our Library Lines service.

For women - dial **0660 204333**

For men - dial **0660 204222**

GORGEOUS CRAZY PROFESSIONAL woman, 45, gsoh, warm, bright, loves music, dancing, walks, cooking, eating out. Seeks equally daft man, to share laughs and cuddles. Ring 0660 206015

COUNT DRACULA SEEKS girl with brass neck. Day job: professional guy, 46, n/s, Tunbridge Wells based, gentle, caring and active. Wanted: intelligent, slim woman, 25-35. Ring 0660 205608

PRETTY, INTELLIGENT, FIT, slim, useful, authoress, graduate, 30 something, loves theatre, opera, ballet, Italy, arts and sciences, seeks attractive highly successful, male graduate, mid/late 40s. Ring 0660 206014

LONDON BASED, STATUESQUE, humorous, Teddy-bear man, early 40s, classical musician, seeks plain, lovely, whimsical, educated, sensuous, one-off woman (30-45), NOT blessed with issue, for inimitable evenings in (and out). Ring 0660 204256

LOOKING FOR A MAN? then why not try our new Library Line service. To listen to a selection of past, present and even future male Opening Lines advertisers, just dial this number. Ring 0660 204222

WARM CRAB or fiery scorpion? Broody Pisces male, 43, wants to fall hook, line and sinker for you. Ring 0660 206035

ATTRACTIVE, PROFESSIONAL FEMALE, slim, brunette, nice smile, 42, seeks interesting man 38ish-48ish, to share her life. Ring 0660 206013

BLUES AND BOOGIE and other excellent things! Imaginative and independent minded girl sought for fun times and romance by hyper-active but domesticated guy. Ring 0660 206033

COUNT DRACULA LIKES a good bite, mirrors and garlic he dislikes, sleeps all day, comes out at night, looking for his angel delight. Ring 0660 204731

TALL, HANDSOME, SOPHISTICATED gent, 39, very successful, exciting lifestyle, seeks slim, attractive lady, 25-35. Ring 0660 206031

PISCEAN MALE, 37, into jazz, guitars, art, ambience, romance, nature, craft, antiques, seeks female 25-35 with above interests, no pubs or clubs, Surrey/Kingston. Ring 0660 206030

THE SEARCH FOR A WOMAN might just be over. If you would like to listen to a selection of past, present and even future Opening Lines female advertisers, then why not try our Library Line Service. Just ring this number. Ring 0660 204333

INDEPENDENT FEMALE, 36, positive, optimistic, attractive, enjoys people, music, eating out. Seeks attractive man, fun to be with, doesn't take life too seriously. Ring 0660 206978

ELF APPEAL; ENGLISH guy, attractive, creative, amusing and wealthy, 6ft, 35, seeks beautiful slim, elf like girl, 21-29, any nationality, to love. Ring 0660 206029

VIVACIOUS BLONDE, SLIM, mid-30s, fun loving, romantic and caring, seeks man for fun, friendship and future, shared interests to include cinema, restaurants, outside activities. Ring 0660 206994

IF YOU ARE 30-40, male, humorous, intelligent, generous, decisive, stable, devoted, looking for a serious relationship with an Irish American woman with similar attributes Ring 0660 206009

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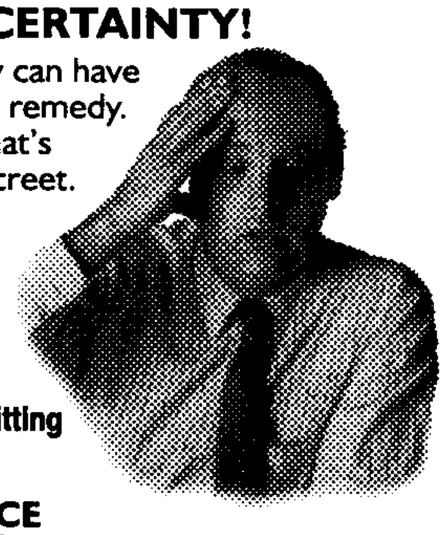

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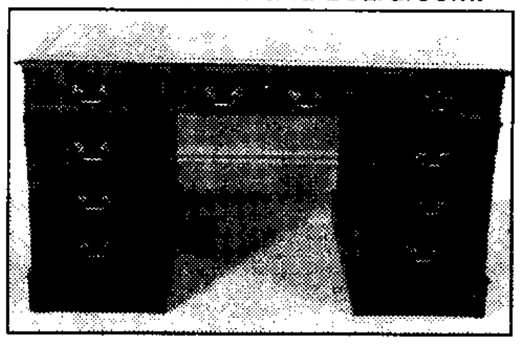

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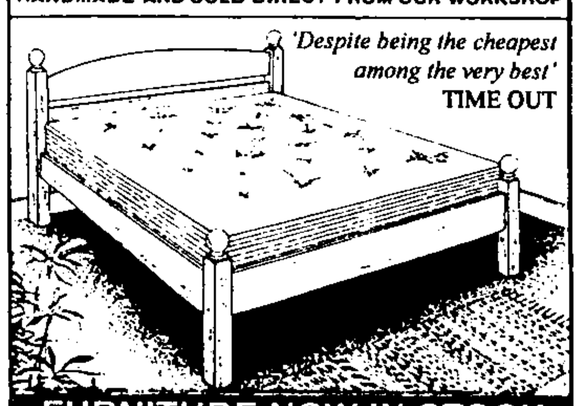

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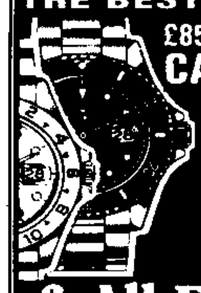

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